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LBSNAA

Dharma-Vijaya

(TRIUMPH OF RIGHTEOUSNESS)

OR

THE REVOLT IN THE TEMPLE

The
REVOLT
in the
TEMPLE

*Composed to Commemorate
2500 Years of the Land,
the Race and the Faith*



SINHA PUBLICATIONS
49 ICELAND BUILDINGS COLOMBO 3

FIRST PUBLISHED - - APRIL 1953

PRINTED AT
THE DAILY NEWS PRESS
LAKE HOUSE
COLOMBO.

To
H E R

WHOSE ASSOCIATION, THOUGH SHORT-LIVED, BECAME A PERMANENT
INSPIRATION FOR THIS WORK AND THE WORKER

Rūpaṃ jīraṭi maccānaṃ nāmagottam na jīraṭi
(*Samyutta Nikaya*)

ABOUT THIS BOOK

THE purpose of this work is to commemorate a great and unique event of modern times, namely, the completion of 2500 years of a three-fold history. This history is that of the Buddhist Faith, of the Sinhalese Race, and of the Land of Ceylon.

According to the *Mahāvamsa* and the ancient Pali Commentaries, the passing away of the Buddha, and the landing in Lanka of Vijaya, the founder of the Sinhalese race, took place on one and the same day. The *Mahāvamsa* relates that the Buddha, on the day of His passing away, addressed Sakra, the king of the gods, thus : “My doctrine, O Sakra, will eventually be established in the Island of Lanka; and on this day, Vijaya, eldest son of Sinha Bahu, King of Sinhapura in the Lata country, lands there with seven hundred followers, and will assume the sovereignty there. Do thou, therefore, guard well the King and his train and the Island of Lanka.”

On receiving the Buddha’s command, Sakra summoned Vishnu: “Do thou, O lotus-hued One, protect with zeal Prince Vijaya and his followers, and the Doctrine that is to endure in Lanka for full five thousand years.”

Thus the *Mahāvamsa* synchronises the death of the Buddha with the founding of the Sinhalese race; and, therefore, in 1956 will occur the unique three-fold event—the completion of 2500 years of Buddhism, of the life of the Sinhalese race, and of Ceylon’s history.

This *Mahāvamsa* tradition has been ingrained in the Sinhalese mind for centuries, and out of it had arisen certain beliefs among them. For more than two thousand years the Sinhalese have been inspired by the ideal that they were a nation brought into being for the definite purpose of carrying the Torch lit by the Buddha. It was through the same tradition that Vishnu was made the patron deity of Ceylon. In almost every Buddhist temple there is an image to the deity who is venerated as the protector of the Land, the Race and the Faith.

Another tradition that is current amongst the Sinhalese is that, when Buddhism shall have completed 2500 years, a prince named Diyasena will establish a Buddhist Kingdom in Ceylon. Then, it is said, the faith will shine forth in glory and be a beacon to the whole world, and Lanka itself will be prosperous and joyous. This prediction, which originated from a verse in a poetical work, written during the reign of Parakrama Bahu VI of Kotte—the last

period of brilliant achievement of the Sinhalese— has been a source of hope and consolation for the Sinhalese during the vicissitudes of the past 500 years.

The Buddha's blessing of Vijaya and his band of followers and the land which they "went forth to possess," foreshadowed the intimate connection of the Land, the Race and the Buddhist Faith. Vijaya himself was a Brahmin in faith, and the best authorities' opinion is that Buddhism was not actually established in Ceylon, and not adopted by the Sinhalese people, until the coming of the missionary, Mahinda Thero, nearly three hundred years later than Vijaya's landing in the Island. Nevertheless the blessing of the Buddha was there: the prophecy was in due course fulfilled: the land and the race flourished, and the arts of civilization were fostered; and through all the vicissitudes of their fortunes from that day to this, the Sinhalese race as a whole (and therefore the vast majority of Ceylon's inhabitants), have remained faithful to the Buddha and the Buddhist precepts, on which their ancient kings founded their legislation and social organization.

Buddhism has been throughout a humanising influence in Ceylon history. There have been times of retrogression when the sacred precepts were forgotten or ignored; times when alien conquerors imposed on portions of the country their faith and their manners. But again and again these alien kings are to be found adopting the Buddhist faith and ethics, and identifying themselves with the Sinhalese people. And through all these vicissitudes, the teaching of the Doctrine and the practice of the faith went on in the temples, the monasteries and the schools. All the materials for the history of Ceylon are to be found in Buddhist chronicles and Buddhist monumental inscriptions.

Thus it is clear that the unifying, healing, progressive principle in the entity called Ceylon was the Buddhist faith. This is said with no intention of denying or belittling the contributions of other races and other faiths—each in their own way, each in their own degree. But, when all has been taken into account, the outstanding fact is the unbroken continuity, for 2500 years, of interaction of the land and the people and the faith on each other, and their resultant contribution to civilization.

The original plan was to issue this book in 1956 together with editions in Pali and Sinhalese, the languages of Buddhism and of the Sinhalese race. In 1946 was celebrated the completion of the restoration of the ancient Buddhist temple at Kelaniya which had been destroyed by Portuguese invaders in 1575. To commemorate

that restoration a souvenir entitled *Here is Kelaniya* was issued. In this souvenir, which had both English and Sinhalese editions, were included certain passages of topical interest from this book. The freshness and vivacity of these excerpts, and the clear and critical mind through which the harvested material had been passed and presented, created a widespread interest in the forthcoming publication. It was, therefore, decided to issue the English and the Sinhalese editions in advance of the date as originally planned.

Dharma-Vijaya (Triumph of Righteousness), or "The Revolt in the Temple," is a trilogy. The first part, *Nidāna Kathā*, or "The Introductory Story," contains the story of the Sinhalese race, felicitously written with touches of unmistakable realism. In it a forgotten world is brought back to life. One is astounded to find how much of the past is yet hidden from us, and how much more we know but vaguely. Yesterday's heroes and their doings, changing social complexions, penetrating vignettes that tell the tale of a once great nation—to read these things is to see, passing before one's eyes, the cavalcade of Lanka's history.

The second part is the *Kalyāna Magga*, or "The Path of Happiness." It is an exposition, in simple language, of the Buddha's teaching. It is modelled on Buddhaghosa's famous thesis, the *Visuddhi Magga*, or "The Path of Purity." In his treatise, Buddhaghosa took a question that was once asked from the Buddha and His reply thereto, and from it wove a profound and comprehensive exposition of Buddhist teaching. *Kalyāna Magga*, by reason of the way in which it deals with a momentous question asked from modern man, and the reply given to it in terms of the truths revealed two thousand five hundred years ago, represents not only a highly illuminating literary production, but also a notably practical guide to the development of human happiness in our time.

The third part is *Rajjañ ca Pajā ca*, or "Man and the State." It is here that the author translates the Buddha's doctrine from its common interpretation of "pie in the sky after you die" to happiness here and now in this actual human world. The author has brought down the present day teaching of the goal of Buddhism from its supermundane heights back to our lowly but very real earthly realm, and has applied that transcendental philosophy to the common facts of life as it is lived today. He tries to do for Buddhism what Burke did for the French Revolution. Burke, however, had looked backward. Our author believes in looking forward for inspiration, although he possesses both the historian's

sense of the past as well as the gift of discerning the trend of current social and political forces.

The Buddhist world is indebted to a galaxy of great Commentators who have shed light on the teachings of the Buddha. But it was a small universe that those inquisitive minds lived in and contemplated. Nagasena (2nd century B.C., N.W. India), Asvaghosa (2nd century A.C., N. India), Nagarjuna (2nd century A.C., S. India), Aryadeva (2nd or 3rd century A.C., Ceylon and India), Asanga (4th century A.C., N. India), Chandrakirti (4th century A.C., S. India), Vasubandhu (4th century A.C., N. India), Dimnaga (4th or 5th century A.C., N. India), Kumarajiva (4th--5th century A.C., China), Bodhidharma (5th century A.C., S. India and China), Buddhadatta (5th century A.C., S. India), Buddhaghosa (5th century A.C., N. India and Ceylon), Dharmapala (5th century A.C., S. India), Santideva (7th century A.C., N. India), Santarakshita (9th century A.C., N. India and Tibet), Dipankara Sṛīgnāna (11th century A.C., N. India and Tibet), Sariputra (12th century A.C., Ceylon), Dharmakirti (12th century A.C., S. India) interpreted the Buddha's message against the background of the age and time in which they respectively lived. But none will dispute the fact that, since then, that universe has expanded both geographically and intellectually.

Mediaeval man knew of only four elements—earth, air, fire and water. By 1940, scientists knew of 92 elements—ranging from light-weight hydrogen, whose atom has only one electron, to heavy uranium, with 92 electrons.

This book is an attempt to interpret the Message delivered twenty-five centuries ago, not only in terms of the expanded universe in which we are living today, but also against the background of the great thinkers who have given their characteristic colour to the thought of our times. The work has, therefore, to be treated as being an entirely new Commentary on the teachings of the Buddha. The intrepidity of such an undertaking will be appreciated, when it is realised that the existing Theravada Commentaries are those that were extant at the Mahavihara at Anuradhapura and translated by Buddhaghosa from Sinhalese into Pali fifteen centuries ago, and that, to this day, orthodox Buddhist doctrine enshrines these Commentaries as the final and immutable statement of the Buddha's sacred truths.

The present work may not claim to be a complete re-exposition of Buddha's teaching in the light of modern knowledge, but it does supply the groundwork for others to build up a new interpretation of these immortal truths, which shall restate them in terms of modern

knowledge, and with such validity that they may be accepted by the hitherto divergent schools of Buddhist thought, namely the Theravada and the Mahayana. Without the establishment of such a harmony, it would seem that the last message of the Buddha Himself, as recorded in the *Mahāvamsa*, may fail of its fulfilment. In that message the Buddha said that His doctrine would endure for five thousand years. Halfway along that journey through time, we of this day may well ask ourselves: What of the journey onwards, and will it proceed to the appointed end?

The world is faced today with the rapid advance of a new doctrine—Marxian Communism. Christianity, for nearly four decades, has been fighting a losing battle against it. But now Buddhism also faces the same issue. How will the Buddhist world meet this challenge? China, a Buddhist country, will soon have to decide this problem. Will she, like the Christian countries, submit to this new doctrine? Or will she, keeping to her tradition of absorbing her conquerors, absorb Marxism into her system and give to the world a new way of life?

Trotsky was not far wrong when he said that the English Revolution, brought about by the Puritans, was nourished on Biblical texts; the French Revolution on the abstractions of democracy; and the Russian Revolution on Marxism. Marx, as we all know, was profoundly influenced in the development of his teaching by German philosophy. Will Buddhist philosophy and its broad ethical inspiration impress its stamp upon Chinese Communism and give a new twist to the Marxian philosophy of materialism? There is hardly a trace of any human emotion in Marx's writings.

Then, will there emerge from Buddhist China an ethical or Utopian interpretation of Marxism, and will China bring about a synthesis of Buddhism and Marxism and thereby humanise the latter? If China does so, she cannot fail to influence the future of the religious, social, ethical, economic and political lives of a greater part of the peoples of the Eastern world. And it is not impossible that this synthesis of Buddhism and Marxism should succeed in conquering the *mind* of Russia, and replacing the present materialistic system in that region. Are we then on the eve of a revolution greater than that of the Renaissance, the Reformation and the French and the Russian Revolutions all combined? A 'revolution,' in short, of world-wide scope?

A century or two ago half of East Asia was paying tribute to the Imperial Court at Peking. It looks as though history may be coming again to a full circle. Peking, under the rule of Mao

Tse-tung, promises to become a sort of Oriental Moscow—a magnet of attraction, a centre of thought and a pattern of reform for a new way of life in the East. And Mao Tse-tung, the Buddhist President of the new regime, may well become an Asian Lenin.

Most of those in positions of responsibility in Asia today are young men who decide for themselves what they want from the West. For them Peking and Moscow are magnets; they are suspicious of London, and even more of Washington. Many of them are Communists, who have studied Mao Tse-tung's *The New Democracy* and believe that this represents an application of Marxist principles to the particular conditions of Asia.

History may well decide that the greatest event of all in the first half of the twentieth century is the upsurge of nationalism in the East. This must be numbered among those mighty movements in human turmoil which occur every few centuries and change the shape of things to come. They herald the shift in the balance of power which could transform the world.

Peoples are apt to forget that great civilizations of ancient times were Oriental, and more than once the East has nearly succeeded in over-running the West. That it did not do so was because the Eastern peoples lacked the material power with which Western man, with his ingenuity and restlessness, had armed himself, so much so that he was able to subdue the East.

His domination was complete. It has lasted for centuries and is only now being broken. The Eastern peoples, however, are not yet ready to stand on their own feet. Russian Communists have been shrewd enough to perceive this fact and to seize their chance. That is why Marxism is entrenched in the Far East, and may tomorrow flood India and the Middle East. But Asian Communists do not accept Moscow's over-all leadership, and they are less subject to Soviet authority than their Central European counterparts. A new regionalism, therefore, is now developing in the Communist world with Peking as its focus.

Mao Tse-tung in China may be the forerunner of a Communist revolt against the Kremlin. This 'Protestant Communist' stands for majority rule, instead of the ruling Moscow dogma of the dictatorship of the proletariat. There is a wide divergence in theory between the Chinese Communists and the Orthodox Marxists as well as the Stalinists of Moscow. It is not yet a clear divergence, for neither side acknowledges—perhaps neither side sees clearly—its own essential position or that of its opponent. But, reduced to their ultimate essentials, the conflicting theories are

these; Orthodox Marxism holds that the class struggle must be waged within China, as elsewhere, so that the proletariat is indisputably master of the country. The Chinese Communists insist on a compromise, a class alliance of the proletariat peasantry, and the active middle-class.

For the Chinese, the Second World War was the Socialist revolution. The main weight of the fighting was borne by the peasants and a part of the middle-class took its share. It was a people's revolution rather than a proletarian one. They would be untrue to their own struggle, of which they are so proud, if they obeyed the dogma of Orthodox Marxism and broke the alliance that freed their country. Marx was wrong about the inevitable increase of the proletariat. Instead of decaying, the middle-class have become more important. Their help is needed if rule is to be by the majority and not by force. While Moscow insists on the dictatorship of the proletariat, the Mao "heresy" recognises the need for an alliance of classes and a mixed economy.

The Russian technique of revolution is not appreciated in the East, which gave to the world the gospel of renunciation of physical force. In India Mahatma Gandhi worked out a prescription better suited to the temperament of the East, and successfully challenged the British power. It is to be expected, therefore, that while Communist-inspired revolutionary movement in the East will look to Moscow for such ideas as productive techniques, propaganda, etc., they will tend to seek guidance, and take their cue in the field of deep political thought, from their own past.

Mr. Harold Stassen, American Republican leader, recently told a Press conference in New Delhi that he believed the American and Soviet ways of life could exist together, "provided neither tried to impose by force its own way of life on the other," and he declared that Asia, with its different philosophy, could provide a major "third stream of philosophical thought leading towards a third way of life. Asia, ancient cradle of civilization, may well be the modern cradle of world peace."

When Asia enters fully into her inheritance, she will one day cast off Russia and her gods just as she is now casting off the Western powers and all their gods. She will find inspiration from within. It is significant that, when India cast off Britain, she went back twenty-five centuries, and did so under the shadow of the greatest of her sons: At the inauguration of the Republic of India, rulers and legislators pledged themselves to serve their country,

before a colossal statue of the Buddha erected in the Assembly Hall at New Delhi ; when Free India evolved a national flag, she emblazoned the *Dharma Chakra*, the symbol of Buddhism, on it ; and when she brought out her new postage stamps, she replaced King George by a Bodhisattva.

A most instructive work, this book is a brilliant "Commando Raid" through history, religion, philosophy, psychology, ethics, politics, economics and sociology. It breaks new ground in its analysis of the religious, political, social and economic realities of our day. There is originality of thought in many of its statements : it releases ideas like a man startling a flock of pigeons into the air ; and, because of their provocative nature, they supply abundant material for discussion or personal analysis. There may be readers who will not share all the author's views, but, on the other hand, the thoughtful reader may find the writer's arguments very difficult to counter or explain away.

The late Venerable Pahamune Sri Sumangala, Maha Nayaka Thero of Malwatta Vihara, Kandy, the Hierarch of the Buddhist Church in Ceylon, has written the Foreword.

SINHA PUBLICATIONS

FOREWORD

OUT of the darkness of unreasoning life, aeons ago, came a strange being, differing from all who had gone before ; in whose eyes had dawned the question :

“ Why ? ”

That word was the birth of consciousness, of creativeness and spiritual responsiveness; the symbol of understanding and progress. The being that could ask that question was not to be the butt of blind physical forces. He was to take a hand in shaping his own destiny.

Yet we, his descendants, thousands of centuries later, waste our lives in accumulating mere wealth, and throw away our wearily accumulated fortunes and even our lives in vain struggle and empty warfare.

Is it not time that we echo the cry of our ancestor of those far off days, and ask: “Why ? ” Is it not time for us to embark on a new quest, not for perishable wealth or material domination, but rather for added knowledge and the broadening of the foundation on which civilization rests ? Is it not even now the time for us to ask what has made us the slaves of money-getting, the victims of war ?

If we do so, we shall fulfil the promise of that far-distant ancestor, the promise that man should conquer circumstances through understanding. Then will man be born again. He will come with truth on his lips and understanding in his heart, to forge a new instrument for human service, to build a new civilization.

When we look back through the mist of years to that strange being who came out of the darkness, and review the never-ending procession of lives advancing along the narrow path of light, and then look forward through the endless future that leads to the ultimate attainment, individual lives seem small indeed. Yet life, as a whole, is indebted to a few enlightened guides for its progress, as flashes from their minds illuminate the feet of mankind in its search for happiness.

Socrates, Plato, Confucius and Jesus brought light to the ancient world. But the Buddha was undoubtedly the greatest religious Teacher the world has known. He set down a code of ethics of a higher order than any before or after His time. He produced, for the benefit of humanity, His Eightfold Way of right thinking and right acting. He was the first to declare the universal brotherhood of man and his followers, though they have degraded much of

His teaching and turned it into creeds and dogmas, have followed His precept of peace and love to all men. He insisted that reason based on evidence was our only guide to truth, and that only through knowledge could mankind attain happiness. Only then could Nirvana be attained—when the annihilation of greed, covetousness and all evil was achieved, and when justice, compassion and goodness only remained.

Buddhism is historically the most important religion, and has influenced the life and thought of more than half the human race. It was the most tremendous religious movement that the world ever saw, the most gigantic spiritual wave ever to burst upon human society. There is no civilization on which its effect has not been felt in some way or another. It has profoundly influenced the thinking portion of the human race for two thousand five hundred years.

At the time the Buddha was born, India was in need of a great spiritual leader. There was already a most powerful body of priests. These priests believed that there was a God, but that this God could be approached and known only through them. People could enter the Holy of Holies only with the permission of the priests. One had to pay them, worship them, place everything in their hands.

The Buddha was the symbol of triumph in the struggle that had been going on between the priests and the people in India. One thing could be said for those Indian priests—they had not been and never were intolerant of religion; they never persecuted religion. Any man was allowed to preach against them. Theirs was such a religion; they never molested any one because of his religious views. But they suffered from the peculiar weaknesses of all priests: they also sought power, they also promulgated rules and regulations and made religion unnecessarily complicated, and thereby undermined the moral strength of those who followed their religion.

The Buddha cut through all these excrescences. He preached the most tremendous truths. He taught one and all without distinction. He taught it to the world at large, because one of His great messages was the equality of man. Men are all equal. No reservations there to anybody. The Buddha was the great preacher of equality. Every man and woman has the same right to attain spirituality—that was His teaching. The difference between the priests and the other castes He abolished. Even the lowest were

entitled to the highest attainments ; He opened the door of salvation to one and all. This teaching was an astounding revelation even to India.

Yet the religion of the Buddha spread fast. Buddhism conferred a great benefit on India by encouraging freedom of thought and by setting at liberty its teeming population, before being entangled in the meshes of ceremonial observances and Brahminical priestcraft.

Buddhism also conferred many other benefits on the nations which embraced the religion. It introduced education and culture ; it encouraged literature and art ; it promoted physical, moral, and intellectual progress ; it proclaimed peace, goodwill, and brotherhood among men ; it deprecated war between nation and nation ; it avowed sympathy with social liberty and freedom ; it gave back much independence to women ; it preached purity in thought, word, and deed ; it taught self-denial without self-torture ; it inculcated generosity, charity, tolerance, love, self-sacrifice, and benevolence, even towards the inferior animals ; it advocated respect for life and compassion towards all creatures ; it forbade avarice and the hoarding of money ; and from its declaration that a man's future depended on his present acts and condition, it did good service in preventing stagnation, stimulating exertion, promoting good works of all kinds, and elevating the character of humanity.

Of all the Teachers of the world, the Buddha was the one who taught us to be self-reliant, who freed us not only from the bondage of our false selves, but also from dependence on the invisible being or beings called God or gods. That giant brain never was superstitious. Believe not because a sacred book says so, because it has been handed down to you from your forefathers, because your friends want you to—but think for yourself ; search truth for yourself ; realize it yourself. Then, if you find it beneficial to one and many, give it to the people.

Great masses followed Him. Kings gave up their thrones ; soldiers laid down their swords. People were able to appreciate and embrace His teaching, so revolutionary, so different from what they had been taught by the priests through the ages.

Buddhism can proudly claim that it has never been the cause of war and strife ; and its Founder was the first to proclaim that knowledge and insight are the only two levers capable of raising humanity.

Remember that only our thoughts, our actions, our unselfishness, can turn humanity, from its lost heritage of happiness, to that new day when man will shed his garments of evil and clothe himself with truth and understanding. The very air we breathe is quickened with thoughts of impending change.

Is there any man, who, in his obdurate pride and indifference to the welfare of others, can refuse this great opportunity to help in remoulding the world? Can any one turn away with callous disregard from so manifest a duty? Can there be any man so selfish as to dare to purchase his individual happiness by separating himself from the common interests of humanity?

A great responsibility rests upon both rich and poor. Men of great wealth, no less than those who toil, must equally yield their best and share all burdens, for mankind can rise above the level of the beast only by placing the good of the whole above the good of the individual. This means sacrifice.

But let us cease counting too meticulously the sacrifices we will have to make, because the essence of sacrifice is that whatever is given or given up should be done spontaneously, not compulsorily. It should be a free will offering, an impulse of generosity, an oblation that, however great or however small, is presented voluntarily, without thought of the cost, majestic in intention and complete in fulfilment.

Our forefathers, when they made Lanka their home, did not lay its foundation for a civilization without sacrifices. Nor in our own time has it been an easy way for any one of us.

These "foundation-fathers" set in motion ideas and principles of justice which, in course of history, secured the inalienable rights of the people, an equal chance for life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness to grow. But even today there can be not much happiness if one is living on the ragged edge of security.

Roughly divided, the social structure of this country, after twenty-five centuries of development, finds only about a fourth of its people at the top possessing any security or freedom from want. The majority of the people, representing about half the total population, are at the bottom,—ill-fed, ill-clothed and ill-housed—many of whom do not know whether the morrow will bring them a meal or not. Midway lies the other one-fourth, who just exist with a sense of security lasting only so long as they are well and working. Let any accidental circumstance occur, and they drop down to the bottom as unemployed and lie helpless.

The revelations noted in this book fill us with shame and sorrow, shame at our own easy-going and comfortable life—we who have taken vows of poverty—and our petty politics of the temple which ignored this vast multitude of suffering humanity, sorrow at the degradation and overwhelming poverty of the Sinhalese—those on whom we depend for our sustenance.

A new picture of Lanka has risen before us, naked, starving, crushed, and utterly miserable.

Both the United Nations and their enemies promised their respective followers a new world after victory was won and peace was established. It was an issue on which the warring nations were competitors rather than enemies. Perhaps the most important of all the things that go to make up these better lives is “freedom from want and freedom from fear.” When we have conquered want, we shall have to a large extent conquered fear, since the dread of poverty—particularly in old age—has always been civilized man’s greatest nightmare.

We are talking of peace without preparing to build the institutions which alone can make peace possible. The shape of the future is being decided by the actions we take now; to postpone the choice of freedom is to prejudice the hope of freedom.

The first necessity, therefore, of an enduring peace is to begin now, in a profound way, the process of domestic reconstruction. Just as there cannot be peace when nation exploits nation, so there cannot be peace when class exploits class. We must recognise, while there is still time, that we are in the midst of a vast revolution from which we emerge either into a new renaissance or into a new dark age.

This treatise is being produced to commemorate one of the greatest facts in history—TWO THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED YEARS OF BUDDHISM, OF THE SINHALESE RACE, AND OF CIVILIZATION IN LANKA. We consider this work a worthy monument of this unique three-fold anniversary. The thoughts inspired by this work will remain a permanent memorial to its composer, who, I am sure, will always be remembered, with feelings of gratitude, by all Buddhists and by all those who have made Lanka their home.

We sponsor the *Dharma-Vijaya*, or “The Revolt in the Temple,” and agree in giving it general support. It is a Blueprint for the next two thousand five hundred years. We are a section of the community who, for over twenty centuries, have nurtured the well-being of this country through all the vicissitudes

of its history. We see the wrongs in our present social order, and we believe that this work indicates both a way out of them and a way in, to a new *Dhamma Samāja* ("Righteous Society").

Few people read much history. This is an age when it is tacitly assumed that the Sangha is concerned only with another world than this, and in this world with nothing but individual conduct as bearing on prospects in that other world.

What the Sangha did during two thousand years and more in this country to make its voice heard in questions of politics and social reform is a matter of simple history. In our day, however, when leaders, newspapers and political organizations profess to speak on behalf of the people, that role of the Sangha is resented even by those who are Buddhists in personal belief and in devotional practice. It is now commonly assumed that Religion is one department of life, like Art or Science, and that it is playing the part of a busy-body when it lays down principles for the guidance of other departments, whether Economics or Sociology, Business or Politics.

Mr. David Hussey, M.A., in his book, *Ceylon and World History*, summarises twenty centuries of Ceylon history—the period from Vijaya to the coming of the Portuguese—in two paragraphs:

"The coming of Vijaya and his followers, about 486 B.C., began a reign of prosperity which reached its height in the reign of Tissa and Duttha Gamini. After that, Ceylon entered upon a long period of slow decline, due largely to Tamil invasions. The decline was averted for a time by vigorous Kings, chiefly by the great Parakramabahu, but it soon set in again.

"By 1505, the wars with the Tamils were over. The long and fierce struggle had spoiled the glory and destroyed the prosperity of the Sinhalese Kingdom; but at the end of it the Sinhalese had the two things which they most valued, their religion and their distinct nationality, still in their hands. They had gone through a terrible struggle to keep them, but they had kept them, and to that extent they had won."

Now, this is altogether a singular and outstanding achievement for a small nation like the Sinhalese. For twenty centuries they stood up manfully against powerful foes in the face of overwhelming odds, with varying success may be, but with matchless courage and determination all the time. At the end they definitely preserved the national religion and their distinct entity as a nation.

For a large measure of this triumph credit is due to the Sangha. It was they who, since Mahinda Thero converted the country to Buddhism, acted with unsleeping vigilance as the guides, guardians and the sponsors of the future of the Sinhalese nation. It was they who, as the upholders of religious and moral authority through alternative travails and triumphs, preserved the unity of the Sinhalese as a distinct people.

The discharge of this dual responsibility, that of acting as the religious as well as social guides of the Sinhalese, is, in terms of the last words of the Master on his deathbed, a service which devolves even today on the Sangha of Lanka. He prophesied that Lanka would be the repository, for full five thousand years, of the pure doctrine. For the effective fulfilment of that prophecy two parties were and are necessary, the Sangha to keep the Torch burning, and the lay people to bear that Torch. Both parties did not fail to shoulder that responsibility for the last twenty centuries, and the nation, if it is to justify its existence, will have to continue to shoulder that responsibility in the same way, during the next twenty-five centuries as well.

From the time of Mahinda Thero, the great procession of spiritual elders who followed him have been continually keeping this dual responsibility in the fore-front of their thoughts and actions. Is it necessary to add that this nation should fit itself in every possible way to bear the great Torch in the future? For a similar reason, therefore, the Sangha of old, through their influence with the kings of Lanka, took it upon themselves, as a duty incumbent on them, to do everything possible to elevate the living conditions of the Sinhalese people.

The temple, for centuries, was not only the centre from which radiated the spirit of religious devotion, but was also the force which invigorated the people and held them together.

We are at present being unconsciously carried on by the momentum of twenty centuries of Buddhism. Our duty today, however, is to see to it that the lofty ideals of service to our fellow-beings, which are an inherent part of our mission, are vividly realised and deliberately placed in the fore-front of our policies.

Happily for us, our national chronicles have recorded for posterity the manner in which the Sangha of old not only wielded influence in the election, coronation, and conduct of kings and sub-kings, but also, whenever the occasion arose, directed and actively participated in the work of the emancipation of the country and its people.

The *Mahāvamsa* describes with much feeling how five-hundred members of the Sangha accompanied the army that Dutugemunu led to liberate the nation from the galling thrall of a foreign yoke. The *Mahāvamsa* has references not only to what we may call these periodical "Revolts in the Temple," but also the exercise by the Sangha of their influence in the direction of the every-day life of the State.

The same chronicle mentions (Ch. 24) that, when King Kākavannatissa (2nd Century, B.C.) died, Tissa, the younger son, crowned himself King. Dutugemunu came with armed forces and fought his brother who, when defeated, appealed to the Thera Yodhagatta Tissa—"I have done ill, Sire, I will make my peace with my brother." The Thera took Tissa in order to effect a reconciliation and, leaving him on the stairs, went into the presence of Dutugemunu and pleaded for the penitent prince, and the brothers were reconciled.

We find it recorded in that same chronicle (Ch. 33) that, on the death of Saddha Tissa (2nd Century, B.C.), a younger brother of the late King was elected as Sovereign, with the consent of the Sangha, at a meeting held at the Thuparama.

It next mentions that Aggabodhi I (6th century, A.C.) "kept piously to the instructions of the Bhikkhu Dathasiva."

A more positive reference to the political influence of the Sangha appears in Chapter 57 where it is stated: "Since that time (7th Century, A.C.) the Sovereigns of Lanka act according to the counsel of the Bhikkhus who hold the leading position."

Again the same chronicle (Ch. 60) records the bestowal of the office of Sub-King, and later of King, on Jayabahu (11th Century, A.C.) by the Sangha of the eight chief Viharas together with the Chief Officers of State, etc.

An 11th Century Tamil inscription states that Vijaya Bahu I wore the Sacred Crown with the sanction of the Sangha.

The *Mahāvamsa* further tells us that when Parakrama Bahu, after a long campaign against his cousin Gajabahu II (12th Century, A.C.), the King of the Rajarata, had brought his adversary to the end of his resources and the prize of the sovereignty of the whole Island was within his reach, the Sangha of the three Fraternities of Polonnaruwa intervened and brought about a reconciliation between the two princes. As a result of this, the dominions of Gajabahu were restored to him, and Parakrama Bahu retired to his own principality of the Dakkhinadesa, on the understanding that, upon the death of the former, he would become entitled to the sovereignty of the Rajarata.

It is also stated in the same Chronicle that, immediately after the cessation of hostilities, Gajabahu went to Madirigiriya Vihara and had the fact of his bequest of the Rajarata to Parakrama Bahu written on a stone in that place. One of the most important epigraphical discoveries of recent times is this rock inscription recording the "Peace Treaty" between Gajabahu II and Parakrama Bahu I, at the ancient Vihara at Sangamuva, near Gokaralla, in the Hiriyala Hat Pattu of the Kurunegala District.

Again the *Mahāvamsa* (Ch. 87) says: "Hereupon he (Parakrama Bahu II, 13th Century A.C.) summoned the Great Community (Sangha) in great numbers, and the King asked them: 'Which of these six princes, my sister's son and my own sons, is worthy of the Royal Crown?' "

Coming to later times (15th Century A.C.), when one of the Kings fell a victim to a ruse by a Chinese general and was carried away a prisoner to China, and the country was in a state of confusion resulting from the absence of a rightful Sovereign, it was a Hierarch of the Sangha, Vidagama Maha Swami, who put an end to the attempts of ambitious Chieftains to seize the Imperial power, by placing on the throne Parakrama Bahu VI of Kotte.

It was the Sangha who saw to it that, in that Treaty by which this *Dhamma Dīpa*, ("Isle of the True Doctrine") was transferred to a Christian Crown, were embodied those clauses by which the indigenous, political and religious institutions were carefully preserved and expressly safeguarded. And it was again a member of the Sangha, Wariyapola Nayaka Thero, who protested when an attempt was made to haul up the British flag before the signing of the Convention.

This rapid survey of history shows that the claim of the Sangha today to be heard in relation to social, political and economic problems and to guide the people is no new demand, but a re-assertion of a right universally exercised and equally widely acknowledged, up to the British occupation of the country.

We are passing through such an era of change as has never been seen in the past. To realise high aims, to be unselfish, to do good—these opportunities are offered to the present generation.

It is within your power and ours to usher in the birth of a new nation and to realise a new vision of the true meaning of life, for the vast multitude of the sons and daughters of Lanka.

We must now ever be mindful that twenty-five centuries of history are looking down upon us, and that the privilege of moulding and setting into motion another twenty-five centuries of history is in our hands.

Let us not fail to cherish our heritage, nor ignore this great privilege.

Thus do we declare

PAHAMUNE SRI SUMANGALA

*Malwatta Vihara
Kandy.*

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PROLOGUE

THE history of Lanka is the history of the Sinhalese race. Neither of the two stories has any extent or significance apart from the other. Both begin with the landing in Ceylon of Prince Vijaya, fugitive from his father's kingdom in north India, with a band of seven hundred companions, his fellow-countrymen.

There are no archaeological remains, no written records, no genuine traditions, to give us any clue to the history of Ceylon prior to that date: only stone implements of the old Stone Age, a few pre-historic legends which are not history, and, in any case, were current not in Ceylon but in India. But after that event, the continuity of oral tradition, of monuments and of documentary history remain, unbroken up to this day. The land nourished the race: the race civilized the land. From the starting point until now, the fortunes of both have been inextricably interwoven.

This bare and brief statement by no means implies an exclusive isolation for Ceylon and the Sinhalese. By an evident geographical necessity, the island and its people, unlike, for example, those of New Zealand or Tibet, have been continually in permanent or ephemeral relations with other peoples. Nevertheless, by applying the terms of Savigny's canon of land-title (possession, adverse possession and prescription), the race and the land can be said to have belonged, and still to belong, to each other.

Buddhism is the golden thread running through the history of the race and the land. The *Mahavamsa*, that source book of Sinhalese history, synchronises the death of the Buddha at Kusinara in India with the founding of the Sinhalese race in Ceylon; and, therefore, in 1956 will occur the unique three-fold event---the completion of 2500 years of Ceylon's history, of the life of the Sinhalese, and of Buddhism.

No doubt the Buddhist world will celebrate, with all due reverence, the religious aspect of this great and unique event, and in these celebrations Ceylon will necessarily be participating. But for the Ceylon people there is also the special national significance as well, and the 2500th anniversary of the race and the land will be greeted with national as well as religious fervour. It seems certain, that in 1956 there will be held in Ceylon a 'Festival of Lanka,' commemorating two and a half millenia of "the Land, the Race and the Faith." But the enthusiasm engendered by this commemoration must not be allowed to fade and die. What is our duty and our objective, when the Festival is over?

We are living in one of the most critical periods of the world's history. Everywhere, in every country, we find profound dissatisfaction with the present order. We find chaos everywhere—chaos in the economic world, chaos in our social life, chaos in religion, chaos in our political life. New problems have arisen and we are finding it hard to grapple with those problems. The fact is that the modern man finds it difficult to continue paying homage to the old world civilization, but he has not yet discovered a new basis of human relationship.

The trouble with our civilization is that, while there has been a vast increase in human power, and consequently a vast release of human energy, there has been no proportionate increase in ethical insight. To make good the deficiency, men have embraced the worship of the State and the philosophy of militarism, which combine to ensure that power shall be used in the most destructive way.

Marxian Communism, with its emphasis on the materialistic interpretation of history, its gospel of class war and its belief in the inevitability of world revolution, is a destructive creed which will and can solve nothing. It forgets that force cannot change the hearts of men—that violence, which is but a manifestation of force, can settle nothing, and that it creates as many problems as it seems to solve. We cannot convert men by coercion, and what we need today is to convert the minds and hearts of men.

It is necessary to lay emphasis upon the method by which the new world must be built up, because the differences among the 'left' groups today relate principally to methods and not ends. For, few will deny that a society of striking inequalities is not, and cannot in its nature be, a just or stable one. There is something wrong somewhere in a State in which individuals, willing and able to work, find it impossible to make a living wage. A wider diffusion of economic potential is necessary both in the interests of social stability and of social justice. For the end of the State as the community of communities must be to provide the conditions for a 'good life'—the conditions which will enable every citizen to start life without avoidable handicaps and with an equal chance.

It is clear that there has to be a break with the past. The older generations had what may be called a negative conception of community. We need to substitute for it a more positive conception. We need to understand that the action of the community touches the individual intimately, that the individual and the society are one and indivisible, and that if the individual is to develop his 'self,' he must be provided by the community with the proper

environment for it. Individualism and Socialism in the sense in which we ordinarily understand them are outworn creeds.

We have attempted in this treatise to indicate what the new approach should be. Emphasis has been laid upon the need for the development of what may be called a 'Social Consciousness.' It is the development of a consciousness which believes that we must live for social and not merely individual ends, that will enable us to solve the problems of a complicated civilization. Only a new faith, a new religion, a new humanitarian outlook, can provide a lasting remedy for our ills.

It is evident, therefore, that we have arrived at a stage in our civilization when we must be prepared to revise old values. So far we have thought far too much in terms of individual and not social ends. Our existing religions, which think far too much in terms of individual salvation, encourage us in this individualism. Our religions both in the East and the West—more so in the East than in the West—have been *static* forces. Here, in Ceylon, this is particularly so; for, in our mental processes, we continue to associate the highest life with a life removed from the ordinary concerns of human existence. The needs of a dynamic world demand, however, that there should be a change in the spiritual outlook that has dominated us so far, and if our religions are to serve any useful end they must become the main inspiration for social action.

We are living through a great period of transition in human history. A new society is growing and struggling in the matrix of the old. When it becomes dominant, it will be found that a new ethics has grown up along with it. New human values will be found taking the place of some of the older values and reinforcing others. A strong sense of human equality, social and economic as well as political, will be a primary virtue, the practice and consequently the true understanding of which is impossible in our class-ridden and race-ridden world. Social responsibility and co-operativeness will take the place of prudence, abstinence, and exclusive concern for family and dependants. The scientific attitude and increased consciousness of the structure and development of society will take the place of piety and respect for tradition. Absolute values are as illusory as *a priori* knowledge. Ethics, which is an expression of human society, has as infinite a future.

The Sinhalese people were entrusted, 2500 years ago, with a great and noble charge, the preservation of the spiritual heritage of Buddhism. What have we done with this trust? At best, we have

conserved the original content of Buddhism: we have contributed nothing creative or expansive. As Dr. Conze says in a very recent work on Buddhism :

“ The creative impulse of Buddhist thought came to a halt about 1500 years after the Buddha's Nirvana. During the last 1000 years no new school of any importance has sprung up, and the Buddhists have merely preserved, as best they could, the great heritage of the past. It is possible to believe that the lotus of the doctrine has, after 1500 years, fully unfolded itself. Perhaps there is no more to come. The conditions of our industrial civilization, however, offer a challenge which may lead to a new synthesis. Unless our present civilization perishes soon from its own violence, Buddhism will have to seek some accommodation with it. The Dharma cannot be heard in a world dominated by modern science and technical progress. A great deal of adaptation is needed, and a great change is bound to take place in the exposition of the doctrine.”

When the Buddhist missionaries came to Lanka, their doctrine found fertile soil in the minds of the people. The Buddhist faith, once established, encountered no real doctrinal opposition, and it has held, in fact, a practically unchallenged supremacy ever since. The history of the faith in India is far otherwise. There, some of the Buddha's fundamental doctrines, such as that of *an-atta* (no soul), were subjected to vigorous challenge from the leaders of orthodox Brahminism, which was itself a highly developed religion, with militant exponents, and a dynamic content. This challenge Buddhism, if it was to survive at all, was compelled to meet and overcome. The very fact of this struggle meant that Buddhism in India became a creative and expanding faith. Thus it is, that the great Buddhist thinkers, such as Asvaghosa, Nagarjuna, Asanga, Vasubandhu developed their conceptions in India, and founded new and varied schools of Buddhist thought, and kept the Torch burning as they defended their faith against its opponents.

With the extinction of Buddhism in India 1000 years ago, this tradition perished. In this treatise we have revived the tradition, and have endeavoured to formulate a “new synthesis” by means of which the pristine doctrine may adapt itself to the conditions of “present civilization.” We do not presume to present our synthesis as a fully-formulated system, complete and flawless; but we hope that our breaking of the ground may encourage others to continue the process of “unfolding the lotus of the doctrine,” so that the Dharma may become again an active force in this world of “modern science and technical progress.”

PART I

NIDĀNA KATHĀ

“THE INTRODUCTORY STORY”

“You must rise or you must fall. You must rule and win, or serve and lose, you must suffer or triumph, you must be anvil or hammer.”

—GOETHE

Chapter 1

THE WHEEL SET IN MOTION

(1) *The Birth of a Nation*

*Patitthissati devinda
 Laṅkāyaṃ mama Sāsanaṃ,
 Tasmā saparivāraṃ taṃ
 Rakkha Laṅkaṃ ca Sādhukaṃ.*
 —Mahāvamsa.*

ONE of the greatest migrations in Indian history, most far-reaching in its shaping-power on the fortunes of this country, took place when Vijaya and his followers landed in Lanka in 543 B.C.

In less than four generations, barren wastes were turned into fruitfulness by thousands of immigrants from Northern India. Thousands of them came, ready from the day they landed on these shores to direct their strength to the development of the newly established State.

Most of these people were Sinhalese in heart and mind before they left their motherland. They brought with them, within them, rather, the ripened fruit of centuries of civilization, literature and art, poetry and music; and Aryan culture was bodily transported to create and enrich the virgin civilization of Lanka. These Aryans dotted the country with settlements of farmers. They turned their industrial genius to the founding of diversified industries, the building of cities, and the construction of wonderful irrigation works.

They fused easily and readily with those who had longer traditions than theirs of life in Ceylon. The mingling of these two streams of tradition and achievement soon created a social civilization which, almost from its inception, made a steady advance.

The stage was thus set for the greatest and the grandest event that has ever happened in this country—the introduction of Buddhism into Ceylon.

For a comprehensive understanding of this epoch-making event in the history of our country, it is necessary to go back to the very

*For translation, see verse introducing section 5 of this Chapter.

times of the active missionary period of the Master Himself. The Buddha had blessed this Island with three visits. On His first visit, on the full-moon day of *Durutu* (January), nine months after He had reached Buddhahood, He took steps to ensure that the Island would become the scene of a great civilization. And so it came to pass that, when, after forty-five years of toil for the welfare of the world, the Buddha, on the day of His passing away, lay on the bed spread for Him in the pleasure-garden of the Mallawa Princes in the city of Kusinara in India, from amongst the gods of the ten thousand world systems gathered there, the Master addressed Himself to Sakra (Indra), who stood near:

“ My doctrine, O Sakra, will eventually be established in the Island of Lanka ; and on this day, Vijaya, eldest son of Sinha Bahu, King of Sinhapura in the Lala country, lands there with seven hundred followers, and will assume the sovereignty there. Do Thou, therefore, guard well the Prince and his train and the Island of Lanka.”

On receiving the Buddha's command, Sakra summoned Vishnu:

“ Do thou, O Lotus-hued one, protect with zeal Prince Vijaya and his followers and the Doctrine that is to endure in Lanka for full five thousand years.”

This command of the Master induced Vishnu to make himself responsible for the welfare of this Island in general, and of Buddhism in particular, for the ensuing five thousand years. And Vishnu, the more effectively to discharge his duty and responsibility, took under his protection a vessel that was at the moment drifting off the coast of Ceylon.

Thus did it happen that, on the very day the Lord died at Kusinara, Vijaya of the Solar race and his band of seven hundred followers of Sinhapura, in pursuance of the design of the Master, and of the gods, landed in Ceylon and so helped to found in Lanka what thereafter came to be known as the Sinhalese race.

The birth of the Sinhalese race would thus seem to have been, not a mere chance, not an accidental occurrence, but a pre-destined event of high import and purpose. The nation seemed designed, as it were, from its rise, primarily to carry aloft for fifty centuries the Torch that was lit by the great World-Mentor twenty-five centuries ago.

(2) *Man's Mental Orbit*

“ The Wheel by Me revolving set,
In ruth for weal of man.
This Wheel of Dharma without peer,
Which none can backward turn.”

THUS was set in motion the *Dhamma Cakka*, or the Wheel of the Law, twenty-five centuries ago, at the foot of the Bo-tree in Gaya, which established a kingdom of righteousness, that held its sway through the centuries, bringing comfort and peace to myriads of the world's creatures. It was the crowning glory, the supreme product of the Indo-Aryan mind, a mentality as pre-eminent in its achievements in the religious sphere, as ancient Greece was great in the realms of philosophy and art; the personality behind it being Gautama, perhaps the greatest figure that has yet appeared in the pageant of human history. He yet remains the fairest flower of that mighty tree of the great Aryan race, which, of all the various root-races that have successively appeared on earth from the remotest times, has held the moral and intellectual supremacy of the world.

Gautama lived in an extraordinarily interesting period in the history of that mighty human stock. From some region, yet undecided, probably in Central Asia, like some perennial zoophyte, it sent forth bud after bud which, reaching adolescence, started to seek new lands and new adventures. Earliest among those were the many bands which, entering India through the Himalayan passes, ultimately settled down in the fertile plains of the Gangetic Doab. There, enjoying the simple pleasures of the physical life,—pleasures that were easily obtained where nature was so bountiful—they devoted their abundant energies and their keen and lucid minds to fathoming the mysterious deeps of the challenging universes of mind and matter. In the course of a few centuries, through long-sustained endeavour, they attained to a perfection in the interior infinities of the spirit comparable, perhaps, to that which, though in a smaller degree, has later been won by their Westward-bound brethren in respect of the external or phenomenal world.

The Aryans were the truest children of Nature. They lived in Nature and with Nature. Their outlook on life and the world was influenced by their conception of the forces of Nature. But it was not the malevolent forces in Nature, in its dreadful and life-crushing manifestations, that moulded their psychology. It was

rather the benevolent aspect of Nature which helped the Aryans in the development of their mental and spiritual faculties to the fullest. They were free from depressing inhibitions, and had no sense of fear and dread in the subconscious mind. Nature taught them to retain naturalness and freshness, to inspire hopefulness, to revel in enjoyment and to maintain a supreme ardour and zest for living. The philosophy of naturalism coloured their religious ideas. They visualised in Nature powerful and life-promoting forces. The Aryans attributed to these their happiness and prosperity.

The Aryan was, in fact, a primitive student of Nature. To understand the laws underlying the forces of Nature was beyond him. He interpreted their significance from the utilitarian standpoint and appreciated their value in relation to man and society. The Aryan did not worry himself about the scientific explanation of the why and how of these forces. But he was positive and assertive in his ideas about them. His conviction was that they had real existence and possessed latent powers of understanding the ways of the world and of men. They had all the human senses, but they were at the same time superhuman, guiding and controlling the destiny of men, and the forces of the world. The Aryan not only anthropomorphized the forces of Nature, but deified them also.

The Aryan gods, created by the Aryan mind and worshipped by the Aryan heart, were the personified forces of Nature. The Aryan was convinced that his own happiness and misfortunes depended on these gods. He offered them prayers and sacrifices, and expected the gods in turn to grant him favours and save him from harm. This nature-worship, in course of time, underwent a great change, says Dr. G. C. Mendis in *The Early History of Ceylon*: "The sacrifices to the gods were gradually elaborated by the Brahmin priests into a complex system of rites and ceremonies, Great emphasis was laid on these, and people began to concentrate more on the correct procedure of ceremonies than on good living. About the same time there arose in India the belief that men and women were born over and over again in this universe, and that the position of an individual in each rebirth depended on his Karma or his actions in his preceding life. The spread of this belief made many ponder deeply on the evils of life and the problem of recurring births, and men grew dissatisfied with the mere performance of sacrifices and rites which assured them, not release from suffering, but only a birth in another state of life."

Ancient India, 2500 years ago, was in the grip of a great intellectual upheaval caused by movements—religious, anti-religious,

ethical, non-ethical, spiritual and materialistic. These were shaping the intellectual outlook of the people. It has been aptly remarked by Rhys Davids: "In no other age and country do we find so universally diffused among all classes of people so earnest a spirit of enquiry, so impartial and deep a respect for all who posed as teachers, however contradictory their doctrines might be."

Man's universe was thus not merely expanding in a geographical and economic sense, but also becoming intellectually and psychologically more comprehensive ; and, in the wake of purely material developments, there followed a corresponding widening of his mental orbit. The rapidly changing political and social relationships had their spiritual counterpart. Even looking at it in historical perspective, and comparing it with other periods of revolutionary changes of human outlook, the intellectual and emotional ferment which began in India towards the end of the seventh century B.C. appears to have been of a magnitude which has hardly ever since been surpassed, and is equalled only by the ideological re-orientations that came, as an aftermath to the discovery of the New World and the sea-route to the East, by a number of European adventurers during the 15th and 16th centuries of the Christian era.

A wide range of intellectual vision and absolute freedom of thought characterised the age. All sorts of speculations tended to the diversification of processes of thought and the free expression of ideas, which ultimately resulted in the formation of variegated life-concepts. India was in a state of intellectual awakening. Sixty-two schools of thought were said to have been active in propounding their philosophies of life in their own characteristic ways.

Different theories of life and after-life prevailed among those who had been initiated into these profound mysteries. Some schools of philosophy, for instance, held the view that one had to endure many tedious cycles of births and deaths before one could hope to attain deliverance. Others held that death was a dreamless sleep from which there was no awakening, and that, with the return of dust to dust, there was an end to the pain and sorrow of humanity, and, this being so, blessed were the dead.

"The morning cometh," the watchman said, "and also the night: If ye will inquire, inquire ye, return, come." Within the next few generations, the point of this baffling statement was to become somewhat more clear. For though the night was to persist, as in fact it persists today, there were men born upon this earth who, to all appearances, might have been heralds of the dawn, diffusing light.

One such man was Gautama.

(3) *The Search for Truth*

“ There is, there must be, an escape !
Impossible there should not be !
I'll make the search and seek the way,
Which from suffering finds release ! ”

SUCH was the transcendental urge which led Gautama to seek for mankind a way of release from suffering and infelicity. He was born 2,500 years ago, heir to the ruler of a small State at the foot-hills of the Himalayas. From an early age he was troubled by the variety and extent of suffering he saw around him, suffering connected with birth, disease, old age, death, running through the whole span of man's life.

Possibly, too, he was struck by the contrast between the splendour and luxury of his court life and the squalor and poverty of the poor who lived in the mud huts around. That grinding poverty of the common people of India is still today a phenomenon that strikes and appals any thinking man who loves his fellow-men.

This consciousness of universal suffering so worked in the young Prince's mind that finally he left his father's court, his wife and new-born child, to try and discover for mankind the path to happiness.

His search led him to sit under the leading sages and mystics of his day, to study the various philosophical schools and to practise every form of asceticism. But in none of these did he find a solution to his problem, and, despairing of help external to his own mind, he decided to seek his goal by himself and within himself. At last a sudden understanding came to him, as he sat in meditation under the Bo-tree at Gaya. From that time on we know him as the Buddha, the Enlightened One.

Between Gautama's renunciation and his Enlightenment there elapsed six years. He was twenty-nine when he left home ; thirty-five when he gained wisdom. It was a long quest.

In the course of his search, he wandered from place to place, from teacher to teacher. He tried to master several doctrines, but found them wanting in what he was striving for ; he worshipped at many strange altars, but found no solace. He subjected himself to the most painful penances which any man is capable of enduring, but discovered their utter futility.

He had been almost at death's door. His most devoted companions had left him in the moment of his greatest need. Even

the strongest bonds of friendship, he saw, were an illusion. And at the end of this struggle and suffering, he appeared to have achieved nothing. The quest for the land of his heart's desire had proved a failure. So it seemed to all those who had watched his career with interest ; so, too, perhaps, it seemed to his own mind in moments of despair.

During those six long years he strove in such wise as no man before or since has striven, and out of that travail was born the illumination by which he discovered the way to Peace.

What was the nature of this experience of Gautama ?

In the first place, it is quite clear that all along Gautama had followed the strictly scientific method of elimination through trial and error. He had gone as far as it was possible to go in metaphysical inquiry, only to find that theoretical knowledge did not touch the heart of the matter, and that, in fact, it led one into a mental wilderness.

With the utmost scrupulousness he had practised the disciplines enjoined by the well-known mystics and ascetics, even subjected himself to such horrible penances as wearing hair-cloth, and lying among decomposing corpses in the cemetery ; but he found them fruitless.

With the realisation of the futility of these methods, there had been born in him an entirely new conception of the problem. The emphasis had shifted from the metaphysical to the moral issue. The question was no longer the attainment of a supra-conscious state of ecstatic bliss, but the extirpation of grief and tribulation, of ill and sorrow, and distraction in the "here and now."

This transference of emphasis was one aspect of his Enlightenment. The other was the working out of a technique of living which would be conducive "to passionlessness, to tranquillity, to insight and to Nirvana," or, in other words, "to the extirpation of grief and tribulation, of ill and sorrow, and distraction in the here and now."

There was thus no mystery attached to Gautama's Enlightenment. It was a simple and intelligible experience: or, perhaps, it would be more correct to say that it was neither more nor less mysterious than, for instance, the discovery and formulation of the Laws of Gravitation, or of those governing the Origin of Species, or of the Theory of Relativity in our time.

What happened to Gautama under the Bo-tree was similar to that which happened to Newton in his orchard, to Darwin in his carriage, and to Einstein while wheeling his son in a perambulator.

It is one of the mysteries of psychic phenomena: all that we know is that a light flashed and radiated and illuminated the night of ignorance.

To Gautama the mass of accumulated experience of countless births, of years of diligent search, combined with moments of vivid inspiration, suddenly fell into order, and the hidden meaning flashed out of the obscurity.

Gautama and these others, it is true, worked in very different fields. Ultimately, however, such difference counts for little. What is more significant is the essential identity of their methods. Gautama's field of investigation was the universe of the human mind, the relationships and laws that govern it, and the properties and behaviour of those subtle elements which enter into its structure.

It is by no means an easy field to investigate on scientific lines. It is easy enough to be objective about a dead frog, but not so easy to be objective about one's heart, pulsating with a whole world of desires. Nevertheless, Gautama did succeed in subjecting "the world within" to some kind of critical scrutiny, and thus succeeded in introducing a certain measure of objectivity into the subjective chaos. This was his distinctive achievement; and this, too, the meaning of his Enlightenment.

He saw life face to face—the interminable waves of life's great ocean all around him, the pulsing, breathing, and gleaming sea of beings: and he saw also the further shore beyond. He saw the grim reality behind the smiling face, and the cause of all sorrow and infelicity. He saw that cause in the very thing, so dear and so precious, for the sake of which all beings are ready to suffer interminable pain.

To the Buddha, the world we live in is a world of suffering, of inexorable processes of life and death. The process of becoming and ceasing to be is profoundly bound up with suffering; at the root of it there is an ever-throbbing sense of grief, of loss and desolation, like a thorn in the flesh.

This, in essence, is the noble truth of suffering, which the Buddha took as the starting-point of His critique of life. He took it as the starting-point because He was, above all other things, concerned with the analysis of the content of human experience, with understanding the elusive pattern of man's subjective universe.

His interpretation remains essentially a psychological interpretation. While the metaphysicians of His age, the amateurs as well as the professionals, were wrangling heatedly over abstract problems, the Buddha was content to focus His whole attention on psychological observations.

These observations led Him to a most disconcerting discovery: the discovery that suffering is the most universal, and the most significant element in human awareness. This explanation remains remarkable—remarkable for its originality no less than for its depth and comprehensiveness.

The Buddha resolved the problem of human suffering in psychological terms. His diagnosis does not attempt to postulate a metaphysical and abstract cause for human suffering. It does not attempt to drag in the Deity and appeal to an arbitrary dualism of good and evil, after the fashion of theologians.

The tormenting sense of sin, which plays so important a part in the pathological philosophy of the Church Fathers and their latter-day devotees, does not enter into it. There is no doctrine of "original sin." The critique is kept on a humanistic level, and the explanation of human suffering is found in an immediate and intelligible cause.

Professor Barua of the University of Calcutta, in a lecture delivered to the Buddhist Brotherhood of the University of Ceylon on "Buddha's Greatness and Role," said: "Buddha's *abhisambodhi* (Enlightenment) proved itself to be of far-reaching effects on man's civilization. India gained through it a dynamic view of reality in lieu of the static view in the Upanishads. The world got a religion without the belief in a personal God, but which fully functioned to create the ideals of character and conduct and to awaken and establish faith in their reality, and also a vigorous missionary religion, which was destined to become a living force in Asiatic and world civilization. A sound system of ethics was built upon psychological foundations, defining and raising the standards of human conduct and heightening the values of human life, efforts and experiences. It gave rise to a system of philosophy, critical in its spirit, dialectical in its mode of argument, analytical in its method, synthetic in its purpose, positivistic in its conclusions, mystical in its practice, but rational in its structure."

(4) *The Message of the Master*

Abstention from all Evil,
Practice of all that is Good,
Purification of Mind and Heart,
This is the teaching of the Buddhas.

—*Dhammapada*.

THE main objective of the Buddha was to mitigate, if He could not eliminate, the sorrows of mankind. As such all His work, all His

teachings, were centred upon the practice of virtue. As such, the Buddha was, first and foremost, the greatest of humanitarians, the first to fathom the true cause of human suffering, and the first to offer a solution for its alleviation ; and His doctrine was, therefore, mainly ethical. That it was the only problem, and the one which engaged His best thought, is clear from His own declaration: "As the vast ocean, O Brethren ! is impregnated with one taste, the taste of salt, so also, O Brethren, this law and doctrine is impregnated with but one taste, the taste of salvation."

The Brahmins, before the birth of Buddhism, had inculcated the doctrine of salvation as dependent upon sacrifice, self-immolation and self-abnegation, typified by the giving of alms to Brahmins, who declared themselves to hold the keys of heaven. The great reform movement in India by the Buddha involved a final break-away from ecclesiastical Brahmin religious tradition, which, for many centuries before the birth of the Master, had been building up a society based on the belief in the sanctity of caste as a divine institution which, as we know, fostered a condition of perpetual servitude of "low caste" to the haughty Brahmin.

Under the Brahminical yoke, society was divided into four castes in terms of occupation, but this purely vocational classification soon crystallized into a rigid and definite ordination. The caste-system is justified by Brahmin precepts, and particularly by the belief in reincarnation. Thus, if one is born an Untouchable in this world, it is because one sinned in one's last life ; and if one behaved well now, Karma, which passes on promotion and demotion, might reward one with rebirth in a superior caste, even Brahminhood. In practice, however, caste was not an incentive to a better moral life, but an absolute restriction against progress and culture.

About 1500 B.C., the *Rig Veda*, bible of the Brahmins, explained how the four basic divisions of humanity sprang from parts of Brahma, the great Indian God-spirit. "His mouth became the Brahmin. His arms became the Kshatriya. His thighs are the Vaisya. The Sudra was produced from his feet"—so said the *Rig Veda*. These scriptural laws have governed social and economic life in India ever since, and under this system Brahmins were regarded as nearly divine, Kshatriyas as predestined to be warriors and princes, Vaisyas as merchants, Sudras as labourers and Chandalas or Untouchables, as sub-human creatures without any caste at all.

The Brahmins included statesmen and priests, some of whom were hermits and beggars. Even these beggars were considered the elite of Brahminism, "twice-born and dwelling in God," the

descendants of the sages who wrote the scriptures that sanctified caste. This caste of Brahmins arrogated to themselves the salvation, not only of themselves, but of others. They were the elect. Without them Nature would cease to function, the gods to protect. Of them the scriptures said, "Assuredly the sun would not rise if the priest did not make sacrifice;" they had the monopoly of the keys to heaven: no one could find salvation but in them, or buy it except from them. They wanted power, authority and reverence. They desired to rule the hearts of men. They wanted not to teach but order; not to raise, but crush. Free trade in righteousness was an abomination to them.

The princes and warriors descended from Brahma's arms necessarily became second. The scripture of the *Bhagavad Gita* said: "To a Kshatriya nothing is better than a lawful fight." The last and largest of the three superior castes was the Vaisya. They were the farmers and the traders. This was in accordance with the scriptural laws of Manu, which said: "A Vaisya must know moreover the excellence and defects of commodities, the profit and loss on merchandise and the means of properly rearing cattle."

At the foot of the ladder of caste were the Sudras, descendants of the conquered aborigines. The Sudra caste was doomed to servitude: "One occupation only the Lord prescribed to the Sudra, to serve meekly those other three castes." The *Rig Veda* said that the Sudra was predestined to be the "servant of another," "to be expelled at will," "to be slain at will." He could own no absolute property because his wealth could be appropriated by his master at will. Even if prosperous, he could not but be the servant of another, washing his superior's feet being his main business. A Sudra could take no part in the rites of religion; he was not allowed to be present when sacrifice was offered. "A Sudra is untruth itself," said the *Satapatha Brahmana*. Startling penalties were to be imposed upon the Sudra who dared to oppose the Brahmin's will: "A Sudra trying to hear Vedic texts shall have his ears filled with molten lava or lac; if he recites the Veda his tongue shall be cut off; if he remembers it he shall be dismembered. If he assumes a position of equality with 'twice-born' men, either in sitting down, conversing, or going along the road, he shall receive corporal punishment." So said the *Apastamba*, one of the early law-books of the Brahmins.

The penology of Manu gave supremacy to the Brahmins. In respect of a Brahmin, a death sentence had to be commuted to one of shaving the hair of his head; death sentences might be passed

on members of all other castes. A king might not kill a Brahmin even if he were found guilty of all the crimes ; he had to banish him from the realm unhurt and with all his possessions. A more heinous sin did not exist in this world than killing a Brahmin ; a king was not even to think of such a project in his mind. For having sexually visited a woman of any "twice-born" caste, whether unprotected or protected (by her husband), a Sudra was to be punished with the mutilation of his reproductive organ and a confiscation of all his goods and estates in the former case, and in the latter case he had to pay the penalty with his life, and all his goods and estates were to be escheated to the sovereign. Below even the Sudras were the Chandalas or Untouchables, for whom life promised nothing but misery, in penance for ancestral sins, and who had but a faint hope of reincarnation on a higher level.

The Buddha, the most famous of the Kshatriyas, was the first to revolt against this Brahminical tyranny. He denied that the gods in heaven could be placated with sanguinary sacrifices. He denied that the Brahmins held the keys of the gates of heaven. He denied that salvation and heaven were attainable by the payment of a price or the offer of a bribe to the heavenly hordes. To Him all men were equal. He anathematized the puerile myth, fabricated by the Brahmins, that the God Brahma had divided human society into predestined orders, and that a section of his creatures had been consigned to eternal serfdom, or to labours against which their struggle and protests were alike futile.

While the Upanishads tolerated, even if they did not encourage, the caste rules, the Buddha's scheme definitely undermined the institution of caste. In the dialogue with the Brahmin Assalayana, the Buddha treated with great irony the belief that the Brahmins alone were the pure caste. He declared that individuals were higher or lower, not according to their birth, but according to their character. He distinguished the Brahmin by mere birth from the true Brahmin by gnosis (right action, speech and knowledge):

" Not by birth does one become an outcast,
Not by birth does one become a Brahmin ;
By one's own actions one becomes an outcast ,
By one's own actions one becomes a Brahmin."

Thus true priesthood or superiority, asserted the Buddha, lay not in birth but in right conduct. "The true Brahmin is one who is rid of passion, hatred and pride; who is restrained in body, speech and

mind; profound in intellect and wise; “mellow as the moon, pure, serene and unperturbed”—very high qualifications indeed for Brahminhood.

The Upanishads advocated the principle of *ahimsā* or non-violence but not unreservedly. The Vedic outlook was so strongly entrenched that the Upanishads suffered Vedic institutions even if they were against the main spirit of their teaching. For example, the *Chandogya Upanishad* declares that the aspirant after release should, among other things, “never give pain to other creatures except at certain holy places,” *i.e.* during animal sacrifices. But the slaughter of animals was in the highest degree offensive to the Buddha and He disallowed animal sacrifices absolutely.

While the Brahmins reserved the study of the sacred scriptures to the members of the three “twice-born” castes, the Buddha abolished all such restrictions. Admitting the intellectual pre-eminence of the Brahmins, the Buddha ranked along with them His Sangha and opened the latter order to the Sūdras and the Chandālas. Sunīta, the sweeper, was as readily taken into the fold as the high caste Brahmin. The real glories of Buddhism are: no “caste,” no “separate self” (no metaphysical entity—as in Brahmin philosophy), no creator God—this belief is treated with irony in the *Digha Nikaya*; no authority of book or priest, and no belief in the efficacy of rites and ceremonies.

The Buddha’s revolt was as all-embracing as it was subversive of the religious and social order of the day. The dominant note of His doctrine was human service; compared to it, He regarded all else as secondary. The main and, indeed, the only purpose of His mission was to find a solution for the alleviation of human suffering. It was that which made Him leave His purple bed, and it was that for which He was seeking a solution. The only solution He could find was that offered in the current thought of the day. He examined all possible solutions, and then, by an eclectic process, lighted upon a scheme neither Vedantic nor Sankhya, but one in which He substituted service for sacrifice, selflessness for selfishness, and equality for exploitation.

“The Buddha,” says Sir Hari Singh Gour in *The Spirit of Buddhism*, “was not only the earliest exponent of the new social system, but He was equally the first in the field to elaborate it. It was He who first proclaimed the equality of man, their fraternity and universal brotherhood. It was He who first denounced the worthlessness of sacrifice to the gods, and taught man the value of social service. It was He who emancipated man from the thralldom

of religion. It was He, again, who released man from the iron heel of a confederacy of priests. And it was He who first told man to exercise his reason and be not the dumb driven cattle meekly following the dogma of religion."

The Buddha addressed Himself, not to select disciples, but to all people, and proclaimed a deliverance from the sins and sorrows of life by self-conquest and universal love, and to His message was added the magnetism of His personality and the undying influence of a noble life. That was the secret of His marvellous success. While denying the existence of any external being or God, who could interfere with the immutable law of cause and effect, His teaching linked together mankind as parts of one universal whole, and denounced the isolated self-seeking of the human heart as the heresy of individuality. Its mission was to make men moral, kinder to others, and happier themselves, and not to propitiate imaginary deities. It accordingly founded its teaching on man's duty to his neighbour, instead of on his obligations to gods.

The Buddha was a far greater heretic and rebel, from the point of view of Brahminism or orthodox Hinduism, than Christ was with regard to Judaism. The outstanding intellectual achievement of the Buddha was the overthrow of the foundation of Brahminism, as of most other religions, the belief in God. Bertrand Russell calls the Buddha, "the greatest atheist of all time."

"In the Buddha," writes H. G. Wells in *The Three Greatest Men in History*, "you see clearly a man, simple, devout, lonely, battling for light—a vivid human personality, not a myth. Beneath a mass of miraculous fable I feel that there also was a man. He, too, gave a message to mankind universal in its character. Many of our best modern ideas are in closest harmony with it. All the miseries and discontents of life are due, he taught, to selfishness. Selfishness takes three forms—one, the desire to satisfy the senses; another, the craving for immortality; and the third is the desire for prosperity, worldliness. Before a man can become serene he must cease to live for his senses or himself. Then he merges into a greater being. Buddha in different language called men to self-forgetfulness five hundred years before Christ. In some ways he was nearer to us and our needs. He was more lucid upon our individual importance in service than Christ and less ambiguous upon the question of personal immortality."

The Buddha's teaching, unlike those of theistic teachers, has not in any manner got into conflict with modern science. In truth,

it has been quite the contrary. For, the findings of science have often supported and vindicated His own views about the world and the nature of existence.

“A wonderful philosophy of dynamism was formulated by Buddha 2500 years ago,” says Professor Radhakrishnan in his *Indian Philosophy*, “a philosophy which is being recreated for us by the discoveries of modern science and the adventures of modern thought. The electro-magnetic theory of matter has brought about a revolution in the general concept of the nature of physical reality. It is no more static stuff but radiant energy. An analogous change has pervaded the world of psychology, and the title of a recent book by M. Bergson, *Mind Energy*, indicates the change in the theory of psychical reality.

“Impressed by the transitoriness of objects, the ceaseless mutation and transformation of things, Buddha formulated a philosophy of change. He reduces substances, souls, monads, things to forces, movements, sequences and processes, and adopts a dynamic conception of reality. Life is nothing but a series of manifestations of becomings and extinctions. It is a stream of becoming. The world of sense and science is from moment to moment. It is recurring rotation of birth and death. Whatever be the duration of any state of being, as brief as a flash of lightning or as long as a millennium, yet all is becoming. All things change. All schools of Buddhism agree that there is nothing human or divine that is permanent.”

Buddhism attempted to shift the centre from the worship of God to the service of man. The Buddha was more keen about teaching a new sense of duty than about founding a new theory of the universe. He started a religion independent of dogma and priesthood, sacrifice and sacrament. He made it clear that salvation did not depend on accepting doubtful dogmas or doing deeds of darkness to appease an angry God. It depended on perfection of character and devotion to the good. With this message of morality and love, Buddhism addressed itself to kings, princes and Brahmins as well as to the poor, the lowly and the disinherited.

For twelve hundred years Buddhism held sway in the land of its birth. During this period it radiated its light to all quarters of the then accessible world. Alexander the Great, in his conquering march upon India (327—324 B.C.), returned with the priceless booty of Buddhism, the tenets of which became a favourite theme for discussion among the wise men who usually thronged his

camp. These philosophers, and the Jews who had followed Alexander after the fall of Jerusalem, returned with this great treasure, which they had discovered in India.

Three centuries before the birth of Christ, Alexander's short life was over. Fourteen years was the span of his reign ; and in it he altered the whole course of the world's history. To Europe and to the Middle East he brought from Buddhist India new ways of looking at the world, a far wider range, a new sympathy for men of alien race, the need of a new philosophy, a new necessity for re-thinking all the old conceptions of religion.

Like the sun, Buddhism entered alike the palaces of kings and the little huts of the poor, beautifying and ennobling them. Within a few years after the Enlightenment, the Doctrine had spread far and wide, attracting all and sundry by its piety, its wisdom, and its consolation. Within a few hundred years after the Buddha's death, His gospel had scaled the Himalayas and crossed mighty rivers and vast deserts and great oceans, bringing the glad tidings of deliverance to nation after nation. Recent archaeological discoveries in Central Asia and elsewhere have revealed Buddhist Empires, vast and populous, in regions now waste and desolate; nations whose very names are lost, but whose high culture may yet be guessed from their archaeological remains. Ceylon and Burma, Siam and Indo-China, Java and Sumatra, China and Tibet, and Korea and Japan received its ennobling influence and were bathed in its purifying radiance.

But soon the night fell—in obedience to the inevitable law of impermanence, which the Buddha Himself had repeatedly emphasised—night, filled with heavy slumber, and with weird and futile dreams sometimes ; and in realm after realm the light faded, flickered and died. The historical fact is that Buddhism instituted a spiritual and social democracy which was distasteful to the priestly caste who had held the common people in bondage for so long ; and also that, when about the 6th century of the Christian era, caste again became dominant, Buddhism faded out of India.

Although the 'Prophet' was thus not ultimately honoured in His own land, the 'Wheel of the Law' which He set in motion, through love of humanity, in order to release it from unhappiness, held out in other kingdoms—the eternity of its universal hope, the immortality of its boundless love, the indestructibility of the element of faith in final good, and the dignity of the proudest assertion ever made of human freedom.

In those kingdoms it flourished and triumphed, and one such kingdom was this Sri Lanka of ours.

(5) *Lanka Receives the Message*

In Lanka, O Lord of gods,
Will My doctrine be established.
Do thou, therefore, guard well
Him, and his followers and Lanka.

—*Mahāvamsa*.

WHILE Vijaya and his immediate successors were improving and developing the Island, the seeds sown by the Master were beginning to bear fruit on the continent of India. Buddhism, ousting Brahminism from its pre-eminence, became the prevailing religion under the great Asoka. The Nanda power in the Gangetic plain gave place to the Maurya Dynasty, and in 268 B.C. Asoka came to the throne, with his capital at Pataliputra (now Patna), which is in the vicinity of Buddha Gaya, the spot where the Buddha had found Enlightenment.

Asoka, the mighty conqueror, sheathing his sword for ever after the conquest of Kalinga, became transformed into the world's most compassionate monarch. The Lord of Hindustan became the Lord of Compassion. Declaring his admiration for the Buddhist ethic, he set up a humane government, whose officials were instructed to provide free medical attention, a compassionate jail administration, poor relief, old age pensions, amenities for travellers and animal hospitals ; while he admonished the people to be dutiful to parents, kind to children and servants, charitable and tolerant. Asoka's frontier policy was in the same vein ; he renounced war as a method of settling disputes, and in a proclamation addressed to the border tribes he told them not to be afraid of him, for his heartfelt desire was to be good to them.

On the numerous stone pillars that Asoka set up were long inscriptions in which he lectured the people in a fatherly tone, and to some extent took them into his confidence, explaining how he had been touched to believe in the Buddha's conception of right conduct by the shock he had sustained in the early years of his reign by seeing with his own eyes the miseries he had inflicted on the Kalinga State to the south of him, by making war on it.

Asoka modelled himself after the Buddha, and worked for the welfare and happiness of his subjects, whom he considered "my children." He carried out the principle of Love that the Buddha had stressed by extending his hand of friendship even to the peoples outside his domain. Asoka literally means "without sorrow",

the name of the ideal state of life that the Buddha aspired to achieve. Of the successors who added their own quota to the achievements of the Buddha, Asoka heads the list. He delighted in calling himself, not Asoka, but *Priya Darsi*, He-who-has-realised-the-good (of the people); and on that score he was *Devanampriya*, "beloved of the gods."

Asoka's reign was the Golden Age of India. His vast empire became a land of peace and happiness. Here was a ruler who ruled according to the Law of the Buddha. Asoka was imbued with the spirit of the teaching of the Master; he was one who lived the Law. He looked after the people as a saint looks after humanity. He completely gave himself up to the Master, to the Dhamma, to the Sangha and to the people. Inscribed rocks and stone pillars, still found from Kashmir to Orissa, bear testimony to the extent of Asoka's Empire, the righteousness and wisdom of his rule, and the nobility of his character. His kingdom from "plain to mountain-cave was freedom's home."

The spread of Buddhism in India at first was due to the efforts of the Sangha which handed down the Dhamma, the teaching of the Buddha. The Emperor Asoka took a personal interest in spreading his new faith in India, and in foreign countries with which he had political and commercial relations. Of the missionaries that left India, Mahinda Thero came to Ceylon, in 247 B.C. and converted the then reigning king of Ceylon, Tissa who, after his conversion, adopted Asoka's surname and was called and known as Devanampiya Tissa, i.e. Tissa, beloved of the gods.

Mahinda Thero met Tissa out hunting in the forest round Mihintale. There he converted the king and his courtiers. He then came with the king to Anuradhapura, where he converted the queen and her attendants. In a very brief space of time, Buddhism replaced Brahminism and became the religion of the Sinhalese.

Tissa, in emulation of Bimbisara of Magadha, dedicated the royal pleasure garden, the Mahameghavana, twenty miles square, to sacred use; within its spacious limits were afterwards to arise the Mahavihara and its mighty dagabas, monasteries and seats of learning, the ruins of which tell the tale of Anuradhapura's greatness to this day.

Tissa himself built many viharas. One of them, consisting of thirty-two cells, was cut out of the living rock at Mihintale. He also erected in Anuradhapura the Thuparama dagaba, the first of its kind. In it later were placed the right collar-bone relic and the alms-bowl of the Buddha, obtained by sending a nephew of Mahinda Thero to the Emperor Asoka.

Sanghamitta Theri, the sister of Mahinda Thero, followed her brother to Ceylon that she might establish the Order of the Bhikkhunis in Lanka. She brought with her a branch of the sacred Bo-tree under which Gautama had attained Enlightenment. The branch, received by Tissa himself, was planted with great pomp and ceremony at Anuradhapura and still flourishes there. It is the oldest historical tree in the world, and the object of profound veneration to millions of Buddhists throughout the world. To this tree, the symbol of gratitude, Anuradhapura, through all its vicissitudes of centuries, owes its escape from the oblivion which has overtaken other mighty cities elsewhere.

Within two centuries Buddhism spread into every inhabited part of the Island. The quick spread of Buddhism in Ceylon was due to many causes. Mahinda Thero and his followers found it easy to preach to the people, as their language was not very different from their own, and they could make themselves understood. Their chief aim was to make people lead virtuous lives, and as their agricultural activities gave the Sinhalese sufficient leisure for religious and cultural development, the Buddhist temples and monasteries, as centres of learning and instruction, supplied a need which had hitherto not been satisfied.

“Under such conditions,” says Dr. G. C. Mendis in *The Early History of Ceylon*, “Buddhism did not fail to exercise a vital influence. Its doctrine of Karma, the law of cause and effect, showed at least the more intelligent people that happiness or suffering depended on themselves and not on the whims and fancies of gods and demons. Its lofty moral code helped them to develop an ethical turn of mind. Its religious practices, such as the observance of the Five Precepts, gave them a sense of discipline, and its teaching of kindness to men and animals, and the noble examples set by the Sangha, helped to wean them away from family feuds and tribal warfare which hindered their agricultural activities.”

The introduction of Buddhism had also other results. The Buddhist missionaries brought, not only a religious message, but also much of the culture of their motherland. Our scriptures, the Tripitakas, brought to Lanka by the original missionaries in oral form, were the first literary works produced in this country.

The art of writing also came to Ceylon with Buddhism. Sinhalese brick and stone architecture and sculpture first appeared after its introduction. The earliest buildings erected in Ceylon were dagabas and viharas. The spread of Buddhism thus helped considerably

in the development of architecture in the Island, and the art of sculpture received a great impetus, when it became the custom to have an image-house in every vihara that was built.

Until the arrival of the Greeks in India, in the second century B.C., the vogue among the Buddhists was to represent the Master only in symbols, such as Footprints (*Sri Pada*), the Umbrella (*Chatra*), the Wheel of the Law (*Dharma Chakra*), or the Bodhi tree, because they wished to be different from the Hindus with their images of gods. The Buddha was an atheist, for the truth had not come to Him from calling upon any god. That He Himself should be represented as a mere god would be a paradox; it was, therefore, more proper to suggest Him by symbol.

The exact date when the Greeks began to turn their attention to Buddhism cannot be stated. But that by 150 B.C. they had begun to interest themselves in the religion is certain. Proof of this is the extant dialogue between Menander or Milinda (170—150 B.C.), the Greek King of Bactria, and the Buddhist sage, Nagasena, preserved in the Pali work called *Milinda Panha*.

As in the Socratic dialogues of Plato and the dialogue between Arjuna and Krishna in the *Gita*, this work, which is fascinating as an early chapter in the meeting of East and West, expounds its message through questions and answers, through homely images and parables. The message of Sariputta, the great disciple of the Buddha, which is also the essence of the message of the Master to mankind, reiterated by Nagasena, is of eternal value: "Let all the world be circled with a heart of love."

With the turn into the first century of the Christian era the Greeks began to be actively interested in the Buddhist religion. Part of this subvention took the form of providing an iconography of the Buddha. Asoka made no images of the Founder of Buddhism, which he had turned into the State religion. The Greeks, with their enormous experience of figure sculpture of all kinds, were well qualified to evolve a suitable form, and it was natural for them to do so. Rome gradually rose to paramouncy in the Mediterranean and had reduced Greece to the condition of a Roman province. The Greek style evolved gradually into the Greco-Roman. This modification of style became felt even on the confines of the Greek world, and it was this evolved style that the Greeks in India employed to represent the Buddha in stone.

The flood-tide of Alexander's conquest of Western Asia left the rich silt of Hellenism fertile to new growths. The Greeks created an iconography for the Buddha, representing Him as a Greek god

or deified king. They dressed Him in the Greco-Roman costume of the period and gave Him the features of a Greek god. But though the Buddha was garbed as a Greek god-king, He was given the poses and gestures, together with certain appurtenances, that were Indian. Thus, He is provided with the mount of wisdom on the top of His head, some of the gestures called hand mudras, and, if seated, was in the posture associated with Indian meditation, the legs crossed under Him, the right foot curled on to the opposite thigh.

While the representation of the Buddha as a seated Yogi belongs to the iconographical tradition of India, the standing figure, which incarnates an Apollo-like beauty, is undoubtedly Hellenic and in both cases the arrangement of drapery closely follows that of Greek statues. That this was a popular innovation is proved by the fact that it was soon copied by the indigenous schools of Buddhist sculpture outside the Greek area of the north-west, for instance at Bharhut and Sanchi in Central India, which were in existence in the second century B.C., and later at Amarāvati and Lanka in the south.

It is established beyond question that this art was brought into existence by the Greeks, working particularly in the region of Gandhara round Peshawar, at the time when their culture was dominant there ; that it created the first sculptured image of the Buddha ; that these images were meant to be worshipped and that the Buddhists in other parts of India soon afterwards abandoned the practice of denoting their Founder by symbols and showed Him as a god after the Greek model. This Greco-Roman representation was the prototype of all His subsequent myriad images throughout Asia.

The art that came into existence through the cultural intercourse between Bactria and India, synthesised into what is chosen to be described as Gandhara art. This Indo-Bactrian art was the inspiration of the forms of Buddhist art that the Sinhalese evolved in Ceylon. In gigantic reliefs sculptured on rocks and in the temples we find the figure of the great Teacher, standing, seated or recumbent, with its marvellous arrangement of drapery.

This development of Sinhalese Art was partly due to the fact that the Buddhist missionaries who came to Ceylon did not break away altogether from their brethren in India. The Sangha, on the other hand, kept in touch with the Buddhist centres in India, and thus helped the people of Ceylon to benefit by the social and cultural movements that took place in the motherland.

Buddhism gave a certain sense of unity to the people of Lanka. The Buddhist teaching, and the common culture that the Sangha spread throughout the Island, gave the earlier inhabitants, and the later arrivals, common ideals which gradually linked them in one common society.

Chapter II

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE SINHALESE KINGDOM

(1) A Thousand Years of History

THE pre-historic era of Ceylon is mythical and legendary, and yet there can be few countries in the world having such a long continuous history and civilisation. At a time when the now great nations of the West were sunk in barbarism, or had not yet come into existence, Lanka was the seat of an ancient kingdom and religion, the nursery of art and the centre of Eastern commerce.

The foundation of the Sinhalese nation, and its subsequent efflorescence, occurred at a time when what is now spoken of as the Old World was in the grip of the Dark Ages. The Sinhalese were a civilised race when the English people were almost barbarous. Music, and all the refinements of art, architecture and the like were in an advanced stage of development when England was being ruled by Boadicea and had the Druids as the heads of their religious faith.

Of all that ancient glory of Lanka, which once had invested her name with widespread fame and renown, there remain now only the ruins of her cities scattered on the plains, like prodigious sermons in stone, emphasising the truth of the impermanence of all things.

But there remains also a record bearing eloquent testimony to the reality of that fame and renown, the great chronicle of Lanka, the *Mahāvamsa*—one of the most extraordinary documents of the world, monumental and magnificent, and a powerful and permanent revelation of a nation's mind and character.

The monarchs of the land, guided by the Sangha, organised the country to fulfil its allotted destiny. Buddhism greatly influenced the course of the history of Lanka, many of the kings being guided in their actions by the Sangha, which encouraged them not only to erect stupas and stately monasteries to the glory of the Master, but also to construct great works of irrigation throughout the country to the immense benefit of agriculture on which the happiness and prosperity of the people always depended.

Throughout the twenty-four centuries of Sinhalese sovereignty, rice cultivation was the principal concern of king and people, and

agriculture one of the noblest of callings. To build "tanks" (artificial irrigation lakes) and to construct irrigation channels were regarded as the wisest and most beneficent acts of a good ruler. The extensive ruins of these irrigation works, scattered in profusion in the ancient kingdom, attest the bounteous care of the kings and the lavish expenditure of money and labour on the national industry ; and the names of these kings live in the grateful recollection of the people as benefactors of their race and country.

Notable among these was Dhatusena (460—478 Christian Era), the noblest monument of whose reign was the Kala-veva, a vast tank fifty miles round, which he constructed as part of his great schemes of irrigation for the benefit of the country. One of his two sons, Kasyapa, of Sigiriya fame, rebelled and threatened him with death unless he revealed the place where his treasure was hid. The king asked him to lead the way to the Kala-veva tank, where he let the water drip through his fingers, and said: "This is my treasure ; this, and the love of my people."

This magnificent irrigation scheme shows the long-range vision of those who planned the economic structure of the country in those ancient times. Kala-veva tank, constructed fourteen centuries ago, still continues to bestow happiness and prosperity upon the people, eliminates floods, provides for times of drought, conserves the soil, and builds up a "protective" food supply.

No Sinhalese can stand below the spill-way of this great tank, when it is in action, and not be proud to belong to the nation which could rear this mighty fabric of a ruler's beneficence.

Great as these irrigation works were, the greatest perhaps in the world, they did not altogether prevent famine in times of severe drought. The national chronicles report the singular manner in which the Sinhalese sovereign, Sri Sanghabodhi (307—309 Christian Era), on one such occasion, manifested his sympathy with his suffering people. "Having at that period learned that the people were suffering from the effects of a drought, this benevolent king, throwing himself down on the ground in the square of the Mahathupa, pronounced this vow: 'Although I should sacrifice my life by it, I will not rise from this spot until rain shall have fallen sufficient to raise me on its flood from the earth.'"

Famines also occurred, such as the one during the reign of the first three Pandyan invaders (103—91 B.C.), when many people perished and others had to live on roots and leaves, madu fruits and husks, stalks of water-lilies and the bark of plantain trees. Another such disaster was the Eka-nalika famine during the reign

of Kudda Naga (248—249 B.C.) when rice was first rationed in Ceylon on the basis of a *neliya* (measure) per head, and hence called Ekanalika (one measure) famine.

Anuradhapura as Capital

About 457 B.C. the capital of Ceylon was transferred from Tammanna Nuvara, which Vijaya had established, to Anuradhapura, which had been built by one of his followers. The first flowers of Sinhalese culture blossomed forth around this city. It marked the achievement by the Sinhalese of the highest stage of civilization, judged both by its intellectual as well as aesthetic achievements.

The period embraced well over a thousand years, and the decline commenced probably through the operation of an age-old economic law—"the high cost of living,"—the failure of the Sinhalese agricultural system to supply sufficient crops to meet the ever-growing needs of an increasing population.

An environment admirably suited to the character of the people; a super-abundance of excellent, though not easily accessible or easily quarried, building material; wise leaders, who developed a highly efficient governmental organisation under which large public works were planned and successfully carried out; and, finally, the native genius of the Sinhalese themselves, elevated and sustained by a lofty ethico-religious social philosophy—these were the principal factors that made the Sinhalese civilization, centred round Anuradhapura, one of the most brilliant cultural achievements of the ancient world.

Tissa, the "Beloved of the Gods"

If ever a single event shaped and signalised the course of a nation's destiny, it was the arrival of Mahinda Thero in the reign of Devanampiya Tissa. It is the incomparable land-mark in the nation's history. Buddhism became the State religion, and the whole country was converted to the Buddha's way of salvation. Under the impulse of this spiritual force, stupendous religious edifices, in extent and architectural interest comparable only to the massive monumental structures of Egypt, studded the land, and the same force produced inspiration for the development of fine arts and literature.

The kings that followed Tissa were so imbued with the new religion that they neglected the military protection of the kingdom,

and paid a very heavy price for it. In their anxiety to gain posthumous merit, they reared dagabas and viharas, instead of forts and defences. They built monasteries, and raised an army of monks, instead of training an army of soldiers to defend the country. And when the invader came, monk and monastery, king and kingdom, were all engulfed. The absence of a protective force at the centre encouraged petty chieftaincies, independent of the king, to rise in the south and the west.

In the year 237 B.C. the troubles of the Vijayan dynasty began. Two Tamil chiefs brought over an army from India, killed the Sinhalese king and usurped the throne for twenty-two years. Thus they showed the Tamils how easy it was to get possession of the Island. So began a relentless feud, which was to rage through future centuries and lead eventually to the undoing of the Sinhalese kingdom. The Tamil usurpers were slain by the Sinhalese prince, Asela, who reigned ten years.

Elara, the Alien

Then came Elara, the Chola prince. Landing with his army at the mouth of the Mahaveli Ganga, he marched to Anuradhapura, overthrew Asela, and ruled over Lanka for forty-four years. Elara was a just ruler, and, though a Hindu, was tolerant of Buddhism. He fortified his kingdom with thirty-two forts, and made Mantota, north of Mannar, a port of landing for Tamils, which they used frequently in after years. During his reign the Sinhalese princes of Maya in the west, and Ruhuna in the south, governed their principalities, but paid him tribute. Just rule and religious tolerance by an alien usurper, however, were not acceptable substitutes for national freedom, and the people never reconciled themselves to this foreign domination.

Vihara Devi, the Princess of Kelaniya

Now, the prince of Ruhuna, Kavan Tissa, was of the Vijayan dynasty; he was the grandson of Yatthala Tissa (whose capital was at Kelaniya), son of Mahanaga, younger brother of Devanampiya Tissa. Mahanaga had much earlier established himself in Ruhuna, making Magama, east of Hambantota, his capital. Kavan Tissa's wife was Vihara Devi, the brave Princess of Kelaniya, who volunteered to be cast adrift on the sea in expiation of her father, Kelani Tissa's sacrilege—the slaying of the high priest of Kelaniya.

Kavan Tissa had two sons by Vihara Devi—Gemunu and Tissa—both scrupulously fostered in the Buddhist faith. The martial-minded youth Gemunu chafed for war against the Tamil usurper,

ignored his pious and peace-loving father's express injunctions, sending him a women's trinket in expression of his disdain, and then fled to the hills of Kotmale, where he lived in concealment for some time. After this act of disobedience he was known as Dutugemunu, or Gemunu the Disobedient.

Dutugemunu, the Liberator

Dutugemunu, on his father's death, began a war with the Tamils. One by one he conquered the outlying fastnesses of the Tamil chieftains. Crossing the Mahaveli he attacked the great stronghold of Vijitapura, near Kala-veva, with its lofty battlements and three-fold lines of trenches. After a four months' siege he captured it.

He next fortified himself round Anuradhapura and won battle after battle in his conflict with the enemy. At length the aged warrior-king, Elara himself, rallied his forces and led the attack. Gemunu sought out his rival in the field and challenged him to single combat. Mounted on charging elephants they fought with spears, and Elara fell.

Then was enacted a deed of chivalry which has been commemorated through the centuries. Dutugemunu had the body of his foe cremated on the spot where he fell, built a tomb over the ashes and decreed it royal honours. Whoever passed that spot, were he even king of Lanka, must silence music and pass on foot,—a custom that long outlived Dutugemunu's day. Having overcome the Tamils, Dutugemunu (161—137 B.C.) devoted himself to religion and good government, and rose to be one of the greatest of Lanka's kings.

Warrior though he was, a pious upbringing had shaped his mind. When he envisaged his wars and the immense sacrifice of life they entailed, he knew no peace, and sought the consolation of religion. He built monuments which to this day bear witness to his munificence and piety—chief among them being a monastery that could compare with palaces, and a dagaba that rivalled in size the very hills.

The Brazen Palace (Lova Maha Paya), as the monastery was called, was a nine-storied structure roofed with sheets of copper. Each floor had a hundred apartments. In the midst of the building was a gilded hall, and in the centre of the hall a throne of ivory embellished with silver, gold, gems and pearls and overshadowed by a white umbrella canopy, the emblem of Sinhalese royalty. All that remains of it today is a group of over a thousand granite monoliths.

A more enduring achievement was the Ruvanveli Dagaba—270 feet high and 1,000 feet in circumference. It was built not by forced but by paid labour, having regard to the heavy taxes entailed by the wars against the Tamils. Its foundations of stone, iron, and copper, reaching down 100 feet, have supported their mighty burden to this day. Buried in the heart of the dagaba was the relic-chamber, replete with gem-studded images of gold and silver of the Compassionate One, and much wealth besides.

The reign of a single king was not sufficient for the accomplishment of a structure of such immense proportions, and death crept on Dutugemunu as the dagaba was nearing completion—the spire and plastering still remaining to be done. In order that the dying king might see what the structure would look like when finished, it was draped with white cloth and surmounted by a temporary bamboo spire. The King was then taken to a spot whence he might behold his two mightiest works, the Ruvanveli Dagaba and the Brazen Palace. Recumbent on a couch, his favourite bhikkhu (once a great warrior) standing by his side, he gazed on these, reminded his bhikkhus that he had been a “slave to the Sangha,” entrusted the completion of the dagaba to his younger brother Tissa, and “dropped into silence.”

Dutugemunu liberated the nation from the galling thrall of a foreign yoke, which the whole country feared was going to last for ever. So, when he accomplished the task of freeing the country, he was almost deified, and his name has endured throughout the centuries in the affectionate remembrance of his countrymen.

Dutugemunu found his people helpless and dejected with little or no courage and, as was thought, with no future. In a few years he left the country full of fire and full of spirit. He projected his own tremendous personality into the brain and arm of every Sinhalese from Ruhuna to Rajarata. He fired the country with a new spirit and made the Sinhalese once more conscious of themselves and their destiny.

As time goes on, and the more history is studied, the greater to men's minds will appear that strange and lonely figure who had dwelt in the wilds of Kotmale in olden times. If Gemunu had no other claim to fame in this Island, he would have it in the memorable answer he gave to his mother, to the question why he “lay curled up in bed.” That simple answer has been our problem from the dawn of our civilisation up to this very day. Whether in the form of violent aggression or peaceful penetration, it is the same.

On the 20th November, 1942, these words of Gemunu were re-echoed in Ceylon when the then Leader of the State Council, the Hon'ble D. S. Senanayake, replying to a debate on the Indian immigration problem, declared:—"We have to live in this country and we have no other country to go to. However hospitable we may be, we cannot accommodate the four hundred million Indian people here. Ours is a small country. What we want is an opportunity to live here and maintain a decent standard of living."

After Dutugemunu's time the Tamils proved a never-failing source of harassment. They made frequent incursions into Ceylon, and Tamil kings often sat on Vijaya's throne. Thirty years after the death of Dutugemunu, Vattagamini (or Valagamba) ascended the throne. He had reigned but five months when the second great Tamil invasion occurred. Seven chiefs under Pulahatta deposed Vattagamini and carried away his queen, Soma Devi.

Vattagamini, the Zealous

For fifteen years the king wandered in concealment in the hilly forests south of Anuradhapura. During that time, five of the Tamil chiefs, each successively killing his predecessor, occupied the throne. Vattagamini slew the fifth and regained his kingdom.

Vattagamini (104—76 B.C.), like his predecessors, was an ardent Buddhist. At Dambulla, where he had once found refuge from his enemies, he built the famous vihara. The Lankarama Dagaba at Anuradhapura was also his. Fired with zeal to surpass even the works of Dutugemunu, he built, on the spot where a Jain ascetic had mocked him in his flight from Anuradhapura, the Abhayagiri Dagaba, the greatest monument of its kind in the world—360 feet in diameter, and 405 feet high, *i.e.* 50 feet higher than St. Paul's. The new monastery was responsible for the first split in the Sangha—the Abhayagiri fraternity teaching doctrines opposed to those of the Mahavihara.

In this reign the Buddha's doctrines, the Pitakas, hitherto perpetuated by word of mouth, were committed to writing by an assembly of the Sangha at Aluvihare, near Matale. (About this time, in 55 B.C., Julius Ceaser was invading Britain).

Anula, the Amorous

Anula, the queen-consort of Chora Naga, started her career of intrigue and licentiousness by forming an illicit intimacy with a palace-guard named Siva, and, in due course, poisoning Chora Naga, her cruel and immoral husband. But her ambition of ascending

the throne herself was thwarted by Kuda Tissa, who seized the government and made himself king. Within three years Anula poisoned Kuda Tissa and became queen of Lanka (47—42 B.C.) with Siva, the palace-guard, as her consort. Subsequently she poisoned Siva, and during the next three years successively lived with a carpenter, a wood-carrier and a palace-priest, all of whom she poisoned, till finally she reigned alone. But the people rose in rebellion against her, and she came to a sad but just end at the hands of Kutakanna Tissa, who succeeded her.

In 110 of the Christian Era the Cholians plundered the country and carried away thousands of Sinhalese to India. Soon afterwards Gaja Bahu avenged the outrage, by crossing over, laying waste the land of the Cholas, and bringing back not only the captives but also a large number of Tamil prisoners whom he settled in Alut Kuru Korale, Harispattuva and Tumpane. An annual Perahera at Anuradhapura subsequently celebrated the triumph.

Voharaka Tissa, the Legislator

Voharaka Tissa (215—237 Christian Era) stands out resplendent in Sinhalese history as the first king who humanised the law by the abolition of physical torture from the penal code. His reign saw the religious dissensions between the Maha and Abhayagiri Viharas rage high. The latter taught the "northern" doctrine of Kashmir, Tibet, and China, learnt from the Indian Vaituliya, as opposed to the teachings of the "southern" Buddhists of Ceylon, Burma and Siam.

Sangabo, the Saintly King

Bali offerings and devil-dancing received impetus in the reign of Siri Sangabo (252—254) when a great plague devastated the land. His pious memory is perpetuated at Attanagalla, near Veyangoda, where he sought sanctuary when his people rose against him, owing to the lawlessness brought about by his leniency to criminals and murderers whom he privately released after conviction.

Jettha Tissa, on the day he ascended the throne, impaled, round the funeral pyre of his father, Gothabhaya, sixty ministers guilty of treason. He built many tanks, and also the Mulgirigala Vihara in the Hambantota district, besides restoring Mutiyangana Vihara at Badulla, attributed originally to Devanampiya Tissa.

Maha Sen, the Builder

And now we arrive at the reign of Maha Sen (277—304) in which the schism in the Sangha, destined to mar its harmony for fourteen centuries, became wider than ever. Alas ! The teachings of the Master had again assimilated the very extravagance against which He had revolted ; and the mystics and the ritualists would not leave the rational thinkers alone.

The king, at first a seceder from the orthodox brotherhood of the Mahavihara, persecuted it for refusing to adopt the new doctrines of the Dharmaruchi fraternity at Abhayagiri. He forbade the bestowal of alms to the Mahavihara Sangha, and thus forced them to abandon their historic abode and settle in Ruhuna. Their vihara, like many other monasteries including the Brazen Palace, was pulled to the ground.

Such sacrilege could not but give offence to the people, and the king's chief ministers banded themselves against him. Maha Sen relented, recanted his heresy, and rebuilt what he had destroyed. To Maha Sen's credit stands the third of the great dagabas—the Jetavanarama, 321 feet high. It was begun before his recantation, and was incomplete at his death.

It is for his tanks, however, that Maha Sen is most famed. Of these he built no less than sixteen, of which Minneriya (20 miles in circumference), the largest, was formed by the erection of a dam across the Kara Ganga, and fed by the Elahara channel, 20 miles long, that tapped the Amban Ganga, a branch of the Mahaveli Ganga.

And so, this king, who at first molested the Sangha and despoiled viharas, afterwards proved a blessing to his people, who, forgetful of the evils he wrought, erected a Devala to his honour at Minneriya, and worshipped him as a deity.

Maha Sen's reign synchronises with the inception of a specially brilliant era in Indian history. Six hundred years after Asoka, there ruled in India a dynasty of kings known as the Guptas, whose capital was at Ayodhya (Oudh). They were paramount throughout India from 320 until 467 of the Christian era, when the "White Huns," from Central Asia, overthrew them.

It was a time of brilliant achievements in literature and the sciences and arts which influenced Ceylon and other Eastern countries. Kalidasa, the world-famed Sanskrit poet, lived in the first half of the fifth century. The Laws of Manu, descriptive of the customs of the Brahmins of Northern India, were compiled. The *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* were crystallized into their present forms.

Sanskrit, the sacred language of the Brahmins, became the popular language, and this led to the slow and sure decay of Buddhism in India. Northern India, which in the days of Asoka had glittered with the yellow robes of the Sangha, became again the home of Brahminism.

Maha Sen was succeeded by his son Kitti Siri Meghavanna (Kit Siri Mevan), to whom it was left to complete the Jetavanarama Dagaba and the restoration of the Brazen Palace begun by his father. Two bhikkhus, whom this king had sent to Buddha-Gaya in India, brought back word that they had no place there in which to stay, and that Buddhism was fast disappearing from Northern India owing to the Gupta kings being Hindus. So with the permission of Samudra-gupta, Siri Meghavanna had a large resthouse built there for pilgrims.

The Tooth Relic is Brought

Kitti Siri Meghavanna's reign (304—332) is chiefly famous for the arrival of the Tooth Relic of the Buddha in Ceylon (313). It was brought from Kalinga and, to prevent it from falling into the hands of a hostile king, it was borne concealed in the hair of the king of Kalinga's daughter, she and her husband travelling as ascetics. For its reception the Dalada Maligava (Palace of the Tooth) was built within the outer walls of the Thuparama. The annual Perahera ceremony (still perpetuated at Kandy) dates from this time, when on festival days the Tooth was carried through the streets of Anuradhapura on the back of the State elephant.

The reign of Jettha Tissa (332—341) (brother of Siri Meghavanna) was noted for the development of the fine arts and of Sinhalese and Pali literature. The king himself was a skilled painter and sculptor.

Buddhadasa, the Physician

Buddhadasa (341—370), brother of the last king, was a physician and surgeon of conspicuous ability. He, says the *Mahāvamsa*, "entertained for mankind at large the compassion a parent feels for his children. He rendered happy the indigent by distributions of riches, protected the rich in their property and life, patronised the virtuous, discountenanced the wicked, and comforted the diseased by providing medical relief. He extended the benefit of his skill to the lowest castes and even animals. He composed a great work, still extant, on medicine, called *Saraththasangraha*."

Buddhadasa's reign was one of peace, prosperity and benevolence. He established hospitals throughout the kingdom, one to every ten villages, and appointed to them physicians who received as payment one twentieth part of the produce of cultivated fields. He built road-side hostels, and stocked them with food for the lame and blind. He founded schools of art, and added the beautiful "Peacock Monastery" to the Mahavihara. He encouraged learning, and had translated the *Suttas*, or discourses of the Buddha, from Pali to Sinhalese.

The Arrival of Fa Hien

In his reign there came to Ceylon, about 412 of the Christian era, the Chinese pilgrim, Fa Hien. His countrymen had for centuries maintained continuous commercial and religious intercourse with Ceylon. He visited Anuradhapura, then in its glory, and remained there two years engaged in transcribing the sacred books. He has vividly described the splendour and magnificence of Anuradhapura, and of the national religion and the prosperity of the Island. He describes Lanka as a land of peace and plenty; the Sinhalese as a most virtuous and industrious race; the land as always cultivated and the prices of produce as never high; slavery as unknown; and the king as compassionate and advised by a Council of Elders, chosen by the people.

In his records of travel in India and Ceylon, Fa Hien describes the conditions existing at Anuradhapura. He says: "The country is temperate, the vicissitude of winter and summer is unknown. The grass and trees are ever verdant. The sowing of the fields is at the pleasure of the people, there is no fixed time for that. . . . Amongst the precious things to be seen there is an image of blue jasper, two chang high, its entire body is formed by the seven precious things. It sparkles with splendour, and is more majestic than can be described. . . . the houses are beautiful and the public edifices well adorned. The streets and the roads are level and straight. In all the crossways there are halls built for preaching. On the 8th, 14th and 15th of the moon they erect a lofty pulpit, and a great multitude of the four castes assemble to listen to the Law. The natives of the country assert that they may have amongst them altogether from 50 to 60,000 ecclesiastics who all eat in common."

Buddhaghosa visits Lanka

Seventy years later, in the reign of Mahanama, the famous commentator, Buddhaghosa Thero, who was born at Buddha Gaya

near the famous Bodhi tree, came to Ceylon from Magadha. He stayed for three years, chiefly at Anuradhapura and Aluvihare, where he re-wrote in Pali the Sinhalese commentaries on the Buddhist Pitakas and composed the *Visuddhi Magga*, a philosophical treatise on Buddhist doctrines. His writings had a profound influence on later scholars.

In Mahanama's reign an embassy was sent to China. Previous embassies from Ceylon to foreign courts were: one to Rome in the first century and another to Rome and China in the fourth century. The death of Mahanama was followed by a stormy period of which the Tamils were not slow to avail themselves.

Mahanama's son (born of a Tamil mother) was killed on the day of his accession by his step-sister, whose notorious husband, Mitta Sena or Karal Sora (Plunderer of Crops), ruled for a year. He was put to death by Tamil invaders, six of whose chiefs successively dominated the Island for twenty-seven years, destroying as usual all Sinhalese institutions; while the Sinhalese chiefs found refuge in Ruhuna.

From among these Sinhalese princes Dhatusena arose, and, expelling the Tamils, won back for the Sinhalese the sovereignty of the Island. He restored the buildings the Tamils had demolished, and built new tanks, the greatest of which was the Kala-veva described earlier. Buddhism now came into its own again.

Mahanama of Mahavamsa Fame

In Dhatusena's reign was composed the *Mahāvamsa*, a chronicle older than any extant in India, by the great historian Mahanama, a member of the Sangha and uncle of the king. Completed five hundred years after Christ, it is a chronicle compiled from records preserved by the Sangha of the Mahavihara.

It is a history, composed in metrical Pali, of the kings from Vijaya to Mahasena. It was resumed in the same style in the reign of Parakrama Bahu the Great (about 1150) and carried down by later scholars from time to time to the end of the eighteenth century. It is mainly to the *Mahāvamsa* that we owe what knowledge we have of Lanka's history—to it and the evidence of our ruined cities.

The Mahavihara, originally established as a monastery, became a great seat of learning and turned into a national University. The expenditure incurred was charged to the royal treasury. It played a conspicuous part in the history of Buddhism and Buddhist literature. Buddhaghosa, Buddhadatta, Dharmapala, Anuruddha, Sariputra and other Buddhist teachers of extraordinary genius

occupied its professional chairs, and it was here that their priceless philosophical works were composed. Till the foundation of the Abhayagiri Vihara in the first century B.C., it maintained its position as Ceylon's unrivalled educational institution and cultural centre.

Kasyapa, the Parricide

Dhatusena had two sons, Moggallana and Kasyapa—the latter by a woman of inferior rank. Kasyapa dethroned his father and put him in a dungeon; and subsequently, failing to secure his treasures, walled him up alive. Moggallana, to escape assassination, fled to India. Kasyapa, fearful of his brother's vengeance, forsook Anuradhapura, and with his treasures betook himself to Sigiriya, an impregnable rock rising abruptly 400 feet out of the forest. He fortified the crag and built a splendid palace on its summit. For eighteen years he reigned over the country from there and lived in luxury and splendour, but under perpetual fear of Moggallana's vengeance. At the end of that time Moggallana arrived with an army, and Kasyapa, sure of victory, descended from his stronghold, mounted on an elephant, and gave him combat. Kasyapa was defeated and committed suicide on the battle-field.

Moggallana reigned in Anuradhapura for 18 years (497—515). He secured himself against invasion by placing guards along the coast. Sigiriya he converted into a vihara, and bestowed it on the great Thera Mahanama, the author of the *Mahāvamsa*.

Anarchy and Invasion

Ever since the parricide Kasyapa (479—497) took himself to the Sihagiri rock, "in fear of the world to come and of Moggallana", the power and glory of Anuradhapura steadily declined. Invasions from India became increasingly frequent. The sixth, seventh and eighth centuries of the Christian era were characterized by murder, revolution and internecine war. The sixth and seventh centuries saw the murder of a dozen kings. Assassination and anarchy stalked the land. Viharas and dagabas were ruthlessly plundered, and agriculture was left to dwindle and die out.

These dismal periods are only relieved by the virtues of dutiful love and reverence, of kings like Aggabodhi (564—598), whose virtues the historian describes in the following touching passage: "He was constant in his attendance on his mother, both by day and by night: and he was wont daily to wait on her betimes and anoint her head with oil, and cleanse her body, and purge the nails of her fingers and dress her in clean and soft clothing. . . . He made offerings

of flowers and perfumes to her as at a shrine, and then bowed himself before her three times. . . . Afterwards he fed her from his own hands with dainty food. . . . He laid out her bed with his own hands. . . . And when he departed from the bed-chamber, he turned not his back on her, but stepped back noiselessly till he could not be seen. . . . In this self-same manner did he serve his mother all the days of his life. On one occasion, when he spoke disdainfully to his servant and called him a slave, it grieved him so that he himself sought to obtain his forgiveness."

Our ancient historians are sometimes accused of glorifying royalty unduly, but when qualities like these are chosen for praise, we find something to admire in the historian's sense of values.

The Nation's Decline

Rivalries within the royal house aided the Tamils, who, already firmly established in the north of Ceylon, rapidly pushed their borders southwards, and fortified themselves round Anuradhapura. In 1001 they looted and demolished the city. A few years of Tamil dominion, and the once resplendent capital was a waste, for the Tamils destroyed never to restore.

Foreign invasion, civil war, recurrent epidemics of malaria, climatic changes bringing in a decreased rainfall, intellectual and aesthetic exhaustion following a long period of forced productivity, social disorganisation, political decay and governmental disintegration, all these have been assigned, at one time or another, by different writers, as the causes for the decline and final eclipse of the Sinhalese civilization that centred round Anuradhapura.

While some of these factors undoubtedly played their part in that decline, especially foreign invasion and civil wars, we believe the chief agency which brought about the fall and abandonment of the old Sinhalese Capital was an age-old economic principle, the law of diminishing returns. After a thousand years of intensive occupation, the Anuradhapura region had been gradually transformed from a heavily forested area to vast man-made waste lands. The forests were replaced by scrub-land, and agriculture, as practised by the Sinhalese, came to an end.

For their sustenance the Sinhalese cultivated rice under irrigation, and produced subsidiary food-crops, by clearing a patch of forest. The agronomic system of these two processes, as practised by the Sinhalese, had serious drawbacks.

In spite of an irrigation system which had attained perfection, the methods of rice cultivation tended to impoverish the soil, as no attention was paid to crop-rotation, soil-fertilization, and soil-denudation.

It is now held that a single crop of rice removes from an acre of soil 80 lbs. of nitrogen, 10 lbs. of phosphoric acid and 50 lbs. of potash. When two crops are taken from the soil every year, for a thousand years, without returning to it what was taken from it, a stage would eventually have been reached, when rice cultivation as practised by the Sinhalese would have had to come to an end.

The primitive system of raising subsidiary food-crops, practised by the Sinhalese, consisted in felling and burning a patch of forest in the dry season, and planting it at the season of the beginning of the rains. The drawback to this pre-Aryan agronomic system, which is called "chena" cultivation, after the Sinhalese word "hena," is more serious than the first.

When the Sinhalese made Lanka their home, its rich top-soil—accumulations of decayed vegetable matter for centuries, on the surface of the soil—was the most valuable heritage they received. And in their system of cultivation, which is in vogue even today, the Sinhalese paid no attention to the problem of the conservation of this priceless inheritance which Nature had bequeathed to them.

With every downpour, millions and millions of tons of top-soil from the burnt chenas were washed off, into the Indian Ocean and the Bay of Bengal. Nobody paid any attention to it. Why should they? There was plenty of virgin land; if one chena was 'washed off', another could be had almost for the clearing. So with no human hindrance, the erosion went on until the 'blood of the soil' was drained to the ocean. Thus most of the total area available for cultivation must have been lying fallow, when the population was much denser than it is today, awaiting reforestation, so that it would be cleared and burned again.

Today, depending on the natural fertility of the region, this process of reforestation takes from fifty to seventy years. If these repeated burnings are continued long enough, a point is eventually reached, where the process of reforestation is retarded, and, instead of woody growth returning to the abandoned chenas, they become overgrown with grass and scrub. When this stage had been reached, agriculture as practised by the Sinhalese was at an end.

Support for this view is furnished in a passage in the historical chronicle, the *Rajavaliya*, the author of which, mourning over the extinction of the Great Dynasty and the decline of the country,

makes the significant remark: "Because the fertility of the land was decreased, the kings who followed were no longer of such consequence as those who went before."

This naturally did not take place all at once, but slowly, with diminishing rice-crops, and the forest gradually retreating before the advancing scrub. The ancient Sinhalese, surely, must have foreseen what was impending; and many, if not most, of the ceremonies performed in the processes of paddy and chena cultivation that have come down to us from our forefathers, represent special appeals to the Deities to send more abundant crops. Archaeological evidence, however, indicates that the Deities did not hearken to these prayers.

The first Aryan civilization of Lanka, after a history lasting over thousand years, vanished and left no trace behind it except the Sacred Bo-tree, the great stupas and the ruins of temples, palaces, tanks and the like. Coming upon the disordered stones of these ruins, once neatly aligned but now separated by writhing roots and overwhelmed by tropical vegetation, one cannot help appreciating, amidst the grandeur that was Anuradhapura, the victory the Sinhalese had won over the jungle.

But alas! the Sinhalese civilization was two thousand years too soon. It was two thousand years in advance of scientific agronomy, without which we now know that all victories are but temporary. Our forefathers won the jungle, but lost a civilization.

With what jealous subtlety the giant creeper extends its insidious embrace! With what inhuman patience the vegetable world strives to re-assert its sway! When the Sinhalese civilization of Anuradhapura disappeared, the jungle immediately re-asserted itself.

The Sinhalese walked out, and the Jungle walked in.

(2) *From Polonnaruwa to Kotte*

HAVING abandoned Anuradhapura, the Sinhalese, at first temporarily, under Aggabodhi VII (781—787), and then permanently under Sena I (846—866), removed the seat of their government to Pulastipura or Polonnaruwa, 50 miles south-east of Anuradhapura, where it remained for the next 300 years. The new capital grew with amazing rapidity. Palaces, temples, gardens and tanks sprang forth and almost eclipsed the older city in splendour.

Sena, the Redeemer

In the new capital, Sena II (866—901), nephew of Sena I, "won back the lost honour of the Sinhalese," restored the prosperity of

the Island, and secured for himself and his immediate successors immunity from Tamil attacks. Espousing the cause of a Pandyan Prince, he even sent a force to Madura, sacked the city, killed its king, set up the Prince in his stead, recovered treasures taken from the Island and brought back great plunder. But civil strife and fierce dissensions among Sinhalese chiefs attracted further Tamil invasions, and many a king had to abandon his capital to the ravaging fury of Tamil iconoclasm, and seek refuge in Ruhuna.

Mahinda V, who came to the throne in 1001, and his queen were taken captive by a Chola king in 1017, and spent their days in exile in India, while a Viceroy of the Indian monarch ruled at Polonnaruwa. Mahinda's infant son, however, was carried to Ruhuna, and thus the ancient Sinhalese royal line was preserved.

So, buffeted by the winds of war, the fortunes of Polonnaruwa waxed and waned ; while from Sinhalese strongholds in Ruhuna, armies, nursed for years by some brave prince or chieftain, time and again put their fortunes to the test against the Tamils, sometimes to be victorious, more often to be defeated.

Vijaya Bahu, the Defender

One such prince was Vijaya Bahu I (1056—1111) who, having spent his early days in adversity and privation, in the jungles of Ruhuna, succeeded, after nineteen years of ceaseless campaigning, in expelling the Tamils not only from Polonnaruwa but also from Anuradhapura. Buddhism, after long years of Hindu dominance, had now reached its lowest ebb ; there were "not ten good bhikkhus in the Island."

The king brought over bhikkhus from Burma, and so gave the impetus to a great revival of Buddhism ; but it is significant that Hindu devalas were respected and Tamil soldiers were maintained in the service of the king.

Parakrama Bahu the Great

Vijaya Bahu's death was followed by a period of disaster, until his grandson, Parakrama Bahu the Great (1153—1186) arose to be a power in Lanka. Nurtured in Ruhuna, redolent of Sinhalese tradition, as a youth he had smarted under the wrongs of his people and nursed dreams of conquest stirred by ancient tales of chivalry. He knew the weakness of his country and the causes of its decay. He was a scholar and soldier and had the acumen and prudence of a great leader. He sent out what in modern parlance are known as "Fifth Columnists", disguised as snake-charmers, pedlars and

pilgrims among the village people, and moved among them himself, testing their feelings. He built up an army composed of well-drilled regiments of Sinhalese, Tamils and Veddahs, and warred against his uncle, the weak king Gaja Bahu. After a long and fierce struggle he captured Polonnaruva and Anuradhapura and took Gaja Bahu prisoner. On the exhortation of the Sangha, however, he retired to his chieftaincy in Ruhuna, and allowed that monarch to reign till his death in 1153.

Then Parakrama Bahu became King of Lanka, and his people "filled the whole heaven with shouts of victory." During his reign of thirty-three years, Polonnaruva rose to the zenith of its greatness, and Anuradhapura's former prosperity was restored. Buddhism, shattered by heresies, was purified, and a friendlier spirit established among the Sangha. At the same time Brahminism was tolerated. Arts, laws and literature flourished. Viharas, such as Jetavanarama and Thuparama, and a temple for the Tooth Relic were built, and more than a thousand tanks, one of them called the "Sea of Parakrama," were constructed and a seven storied palace of great splendour and a Council Chamber arose in the city, which was surrounded with a rampart.

The might of Parakrama made itself felt outside Ceylon. Alaungsithu, the then king of Burma, provoked his anger in divers ways, particularly by imprisoning and ill-treating his messengers, and doing injury to members of the Sinhalese embassy in Burma. "What King is there in the whole of India that dare behave to my ambassadors in this manner?," asked Parakrama wrathfully. And thereupon he ordered out a punitive expedition to punish the Burmese king, to take him captive or kill him. A large fleet of ships, well-equipped with provisions, weapons of war, medicines, physicians and even nurses, was made ready and set sail, manned by thousands of Sinhalese marines. A portion of the fleet was wrecked in a storm, but the surviving ships, under the command of the general, Kitti Nagaragiri, successfully invaded Burma, slew the King, entered the Burmese capital in triumph and exacted yearly tribute from the kingdom.

Parakrama also espoused the cause of a Pandyan against a Chola king, and sent his armies to India, where they won battle after battle, laid waste the country, entered Madura, expelled its ruler, and set up another in his place as vassal of the king of Ceylon. Tamil prisoners were brought back and set to repair the Ruvanveli Dagaba which the Cholians had damaged.

The country was united and its government reorganised. Three Ministers assisted the king, twelve Governors ruled over provinces, and eighty-four other officials over smaller districts. A Council of State, with official and unofficial members, sat at Polonnaruwa. He made Lanka the granary of the East and caused wealth and plenty to flow to all, inspired poets to song, and brought in the Sinhalese Golden Age. "He was the greatest of far-seeing men," wrote the ancient Chronicler. And again in an ecstatic outburst: "Here is the power of merit; here is wisdom; here is faith in the Buddha; here is fame, here is glory; here is majesty exceeding great."

"His career is a fit theme for an epic poem," says Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam in his *Sketches of Ceylon History*, and asks: "When will a Sinhalese Valmiki arise to sing the story of Parakrama's glorious life and fix it among the imperishable traditions of the race?"

National glory and security cannot be had for nothing. These blessings are not rained down from heaven. But Parakrama paid too high a price for their acquisition. Although he succeeded, partly by excessive taxation, and partly by compulsory labour, in making his reign, as Turnour says, "the most martial, enterprising and glorious in Sinhalese history," and had earned for himself undying fame, he also succeeded in rousing into rebellion a nation always distinguished for its wondrous patience under the oppression of some of its kings.

Parakrama was succeeded by his nephew, Vijaya Bahu II (1186—1187). He is celebrated in the national chronicles as a most religious prince, who himself wrote letters in the sacred language to exhort the King of Ramanya (Burma) to aid him in extending the faith, and who took great pains to administer impartial justice, and relieved the people from the disabilities from which they had been suffering under his predecessor.

Nissanka Malla, the Boastful

On Vijaya Bahu's assassination, the throne was seized by the Kalinga prince, Nissanka Malla (1187—1196). Although the large number of inscriptions he has left behind often exaggerate his achievements, Nissanka Malla was a quiet and patriotic, if not a very vigorous or wise, prince, who devoted the nine short years of his reign to internal reforms. He visited all parts of the Island, and one of his inscriptions says that "such was the security which he

established, that even a woman might traverse the Island with a precious jewel and not be asked what it was."

The means by which he accomplished this seem to be an anticipation of the Beveridge Plan. "He put down robbery," says the Ruvanveli inscription, "by relieving—through gifts of cattle and fields, gold, silver and money, pearls, jewellery and clothes, as each one desired—the anxiety of the people, who, impoverished and oppressed by the very severe taxation of Parakrama Bahu the First (which exceeded what was customary by former kings), lived by robbery; for, thought he, they steal because they desire to live."

Nissanka Malla reduced taxation, remitting entirely one tax—that on hill-paddy—which was felt as a particular hardship, and at the same time greatly improved communications, repairing the roads and putting up rest-houses along them for the use of travellers. "Removing far away the fear of poverty, and the fear of thieves and the fear of oppression, he made every one in the Island of Lanka happy"; but he lavished enormous sums on the Sangha. He is said, in one inscription, to have spent seven lakhs of silver on the Cave Temple at Dambulla and forty lakhs on the Ruvanveli Dagaba at Anuradhapura, and he is known to have built the huge Rankot Dagaba at Pulastipura, and the exquisite stone Temple of the Tooth at the same place, certainly the most beautiful, though one of the smallest, ancient temples in Ceylon.

This reign was followed by a period of treachery and murder, dishonour and intrigue when the throne of the country was filled according to the alternations of the whims and fancies of the infamous Queen Leelavathi, the widow of Parakrama Bahu the Great.

Magha, the Wicked

In 1215, the Tamils under Magha of Kalinga, more merciless than any previous invader, landed in Lanka. They ransacked the kingdom "even as a wild fire doth a forest." They killed man and beast, broke images, destroyed temples and books and libraries, made dwelling-places of viharas, and tortured the rich for their wealth. They took Parakrama Pandu captive, plucked out his eyes, and despoiled him of his treasures. They stalked about the land hither and thither, crying out boastfully, "Lo! we are the giants of Kerala." "Alas! Alas!" says the historian, "Even so do those Tamil giants of Mara destroy the Kingdom and the religion of the land."

Magha reigned twenty-one years, though scattered among the mountains were Sinhalese strongholds which his armies could not subdue. Contrasting the glorious reign of Parakrama Bahu with this reign of terror and cruelty, it seemed as if the Sinhalese had climbed to the doors of heaven and then sunk down to the gates of hell.

Vijaya Bahu, the Patriot

After tyrannising over the unhappy country for twenty-one years, Magha was attacked by a young chief named Vijaya Bahu, who rallied around his standard the brave mountaineers—always the last to be subdued, and the first to revolt. In a desperate struggle, which lasted three years, they regained from their oppressors first the mountain districts, then the plains of Ruhuna in the south, and at last the capital, Pulastipura, and the plains of the north. But the latter city had been completely ruined, when the patriot chief was crowned King of all Ceylon, under the title of Vijaya Bahu III (1232—1236). In 1235 he removed the seat of Government to Dambadeniya.

Parakrama, the Learned

Vijaya Bahu III so strengthened the country that when the hereditary foes of Ceylon again invaded the Island, in the time of his son, Pandita Parakrama Bahu II (1236—1271), they met with a signal defeat. Both these monarchs were great patrons of literature, and the latter especially, who was himself a voluminous writer, took great pains to restore the sacred books, many of which had been destroyed in the time of Magha, and caused the chronicles of the Island to be completed down to his reign.

This great king was as distinguished for his success in the field, as for his intellectual attainments, which are abundantly manifest in his commentary on the *Visuddhi Magga*, and the *Kavsilumina*, the King's masterpiece, which is also the greatest work in the Sinhalese language. It was about this time that the *Sidat Sangarava*, the most important work on Sinhalese grammar, was written.

Henceforth Sinhalese power rapidly declined. Short reigns, tortured by violence, sundered the kingdom into rival chieftaincies. There were feuds within and pressure without, and there was no man strong enough to hold the people together. The Tamils destroyed the irrigation works of the Sinhalese, and laid desolate the lands they conquered. What war began, malaria completed.

The invaders pressed on, and forced the Sinhalese to retire further and further southwards where they established a series of capitals at a number of places.

The glory that was Rajarata succumbed, like everything else, to the inexorable law of impermanence, so vividly delineated by the Master. And in Lanka, as in other countries, her history has been an alternation of periods of prosperity and adversity, triumphs and travail, liberty and tyranny, beauty and horror, tolerance and persecution, plenty and famine, freedom and servitude, and grandeur and decadence.

Yapahuva as Capital

After the eclipse of Polonnaruva, Yapahuva enjoyed an ephemeral glory by becoming the capital of Lanka under Bhuvaneka Bahu I. Long before Bhuvaneka Bahu's reign, Yapahuva had been fortified by Sinhalese engineers with moats, bastions and look-outs, a wall of earth and a second wall of granite—indeed a mighty rock-fortress standing sentinel over the eastern plains. It was occupied by the Commander-in-chief, Subha, who, says the *Mahāvamsa*, “dwelt there like unto Vessavana, keeping at a distance the Kerala demons and defending that portion of the country and the religion thereof.” When Vijaya Bahu IV (1270—1272) was assassinated by his general Mitta, the sub-king Bhuvaneka Bahu fled to Yapahuva and took refuge there until Mitta was slain.

When Bhuvaneka Bahu (1272—1283) ascended the throne, he took up his residence at Yapahuva and “greatly extended and adorned it so that it shone with exceeding beauty.” He was responsible for the erection of the Temple of the Tooth and the Royal Palace, of which the latter's magnificent stairway alone remains today. The life of Yapahuva as the capital of Lanka lasted only till the death of Bhuvaneka Bahu in 1283, when it was subjugated and despoiled by another Tamil invasion. It is, however, to the Portuguese that the odium of the final destruction of Yapahuva pertains, since they plundered it ruthlessly in their search for treasure in the sixteenth century of the Christian era.

Parakrama Bahu of Kotte

After Yapahuva, the uneasy seat of government was shifted from place to place, to Dambadeniya back again, and thence to Kurunegala, from where it migrated to Gampola, and finally to

Kotte, where Lanka was once again brought under a single overlord. The Sinhalese, in their new capital, reached their last period of brilliant achievement, during the reign of Parakrama Bahu VI (1412—1467). Poets of imperishable renown like Totagamuve Sri Rahula, Vidagama Maitreya and Keragala Vanaratana, all members of the Sangha, gave learning and culture an impetus such as it had never before had in ancient times.

And then the prowess of Europe faced the East. Gold-hunger entered Lanka along with the Cross, and the long struggle began between the Sinhalese who cherished their independence and their religion, and the 'just and fair intentions' of the Western Church and the Western Princes who, while professing that they were out to sell a place in heaven to the Sinhalese, were determined to wring, in the shortest possible time, as much wealth as possible from them and from their land.

(3) *The Portuguese Era*

"THERE is in our harbour of Colombo a race of people fair of skin and comely withal. They don jackets of iron and hats of iron ; they rest not a minute in one place ; they walk here and there ; they eat hunks of stone and drink blood ; they give two to three pieces of gold and silver for one fish or one lime; the report of their cannon is louder than thunder when it bursts on the rock Yughan-dara. Their cannon balls fly many a *gauva* and shatter fortresses of granite."

Such was the report conveyed to Vira Parakrama Bahu VIII (1484—1509), King of Kotte, when Don Lourenzo de Almeida arrived off Colombo on 15th November, 1505. Thirteen years later, in 1518, the chief Portuguese official in the East, Lopo Soarez de Albergaria, appeared before Colombo with a large fleet and demanded from Vijaya Bahu VII, (1509—1521), the then Sinhalese sovereign at Kotte, leave to build a fort.

Vijaya Bahu, the Conciliator

The Sinhalese, who, during the first arrival of the Portuguese in 1505 and the intervening years, had seen with horror the inhuman ferocity which marked the execution of the policy of these adventurers, were not at all willing to grant them their request. They knew only too well that the entry of these foreigners could but result in the destruction of the national religion and the country's independence.

In spite of the opposition of the Sinhalese, the Portuguese effected a landing. Although the people were entirely against receiving the Portuguese into their midst, the Sinhalese king was averse to taking violent measures against them. He therefore entered into an alliance with them and granted the privilege they demanded—to build a fort.

The die was cast. A new chapter of history had begun only to record the progress of four and a half centuries of foreign domination.

Thus came into being the Fort of Colombo, which the warrior-king, Raja Sinha, in prophetic vision described as the “origin and mother of all the evil that has come upon this Island,” and which the Portuguese mistakenly thought would be the nucleus of a tropical Portuguese Empire.

Civil strife and internal dissensions gave the Portuguese the opportunity of obtaining a permanent foothold in the Island; the control of the sea, the superiority of Western military equipment, the strength of the fortress of Colombo and the rivalries of warring local kings enabled them to consolidate their position. Finally, as heirs-designate of the kings of Kotte, they embarked on a career of conquest which made them, by the end of the seventeenth century, the rulers of a considerable portion of the coastal region of the Island.

Raja Sinha, the Warrior

The resistance made by the Sinhalese, led by such national leaders as Mayadunne, Cosme Mudaliyar, Vidiya Bandara and Raja Sinha I, for nearly one and a half centuries, to shake off this alien domination, stands out in letters of gold in the annals of our history.

One of the greatest battles for national freedom was fought in 1559 on the left bank of the Kelani River, 9 miles from Colombo. It was one of the bloodiest and most decisive battles in Sinhalese history. At Mulleriyava, the two armies came to death grips; the hatred of the Sinhalese for the aggressor, who came to ravage their land with the “Banner of Christ” in the forefront, and that of the Portuguese for the “Infidel”, fused into white-hot fury, and in the indescribable carnage that followed, “blood flowed like water,” says the old chronicle. But the Sinhalese led by Raja Sinha, the “Lion-hearted,” fought on undismayed and with never-flagging courage.

Eventually the Portuguese turned in flight. De Meneses, the Portuguese captain, seized the Banner of Christ, which they were abandoning, and tried to rally his men round it, but his voice was lost in the din of battle. Raja Sinha, perceiving that victory was in his grasp, pursued the hated enemy vigorously. Their complete destruction seemed assured. The Sinhalese opened out their ranks and gave the Portuguese an opportunity of reaching the river, and getting on board the vessels, which were waiting there. Only a demoralised and weary handful succeeded in reaching the camp, where De Meneses threw himself on the ground, cursing himself in the depths of despair.

No leader ever embodied more fully a virile people's characteristics, or was more prompt to defend its rights to the last ditch, than Raja Sinha.

When will our people perpetuate the memory of their last great warrior-king, and demonstrate their gratitude by erecting a memorial on the field of Mulleriyava, to him and to the fallen Sinhalese heroes who sacrificed their lives in order that their descendants might live in freedom?

The Patriots Speak

By guile and arms the Portuguese retained an uneasy hold on the country. Patriotic Sinhalese who were incensed over foreign domination kindled the people to action with fiery word: "How long, illustrious companions, shall we live as slaves to these vile Portuguese, whose harsh servitude you have borne for nearly 125 years without any liberty? Is it possible that you should be so far removed from reason, so habituated to slavery, that, being able to be free men and lords, you exchange your freedom for slavery, without letting the remembrance of what your ancestors held raise an honourable thought in your hearts?"

In that strain did Cosme Mudaliyar address his kinsmen assembled in his house and stir their hearts to rebellion. It was his historic outburst that roused the Lascareens to desert Constantine de Sa de Noronha, as a sequel to which the Sinhalese army routed the enemy forces, killed de Noronha in battle, obtained the surrender of the garrison of Menikkadavara, and concluded a victorious campaign with the signing of the peace treaty at Attapitiya in 1634.

"Who does not see," said the valiant leader, "that our religion is fallen, our nobility extinct, our riches drained? Where was the Sinhalese nobility? Where were the Sinhalese kings, in blood,

in glory and in splendour, akin with and rivals of the sun himself? Where was that ancient Empire? What could they expect from Eastern nations who knew that, forgetful of themselves, the Sinhalese became subject to a European foreigner? Fathers took up arms against sons, brothers against brothers, to give the glory and profit to foreigners.

“Now is the time, kinsmen and friends, to seize the occasion. . . . We have a valiant General. Let him be a Dutugemunu, he is but a man. . . . We have for us one of the most valorous of kings (Rajasinha II) who only waits for your word. We have the might of the whole Island against so few men. We have experience in war, practice in arms and captains bred on the field from boyhood. What is there to hold us back? What do we wait for? What do we lack, save a gallant determination to die or conquer?”

One of the most fierce opponents of the Portuguese was Mayadunne. In this manner did he address his Council of State: “You know the trouble which the preservation of this city, Sitavaka, gave me, the trouble of the sieges laid to it, the pains I suffered when I beheld the fire seizing your houses, and my palace—erected at such cost and care—and, still more to be deplored, our temples—the witnesses of our religion—burnt down.

“If you remember all this, the memory of those painful sights, which affect all, will excite motives of vengeance, to do against the Portuguese, what zeal turned to hatred will dictate; for dissimulation can be prudent only so long as you obtain by it what without it would be lost. Hitherto the only reason for it was Vidiya Bandara, whom alone I feared. He is dead, as you know. Now it only remains to drive our spears into the breasts of the Portuguese, the authors of our ruin.”

The bhikkhus themselves were immensely impressed by Mayadunne’s patriotism. They understood the object of Mayadunne was to preserve and spread the true doctrine. They promised their support to Mayadunne, the “champion of our religion.” Under a Bo-tree a Nayaka Thero lashed out:—“If as Sinhalese, you are grieved to see your country deprived of freedom and given over to tyrants, as observers of the Law you should be still more afflicted to see the contempt into which it has fallen.”

The Maha Thero thus taunted the time-servers of his day “That the robust lascarreen, the rude farmer and the thoughtless noble should be deluded is not strange, for their office or labour or self-interest gives them no room for reflection and their heedlessness

or ignorance excuses them." But how could the members of the audience put up with such patent wrongs without fear of some great punishment? How could they dissimulate an evil "when our customs are made barbarous, our rights prevented, and the Buddhist religion and the Buddhist temples so profaned? Realize, O realize the error into which you have fallen. Stir up this misguided (Dharmapala) to drive the Portuguese out of his kingdom, along with the faith he has embraced, and not to disgrace the nobility of the ancestors.....

"Mayadunne attacks because he fears that in course of time this kingdom will go to strangers. Remember, that from small beginnings springs the downfall of great empires....It is zeal alone which makes me remind you of this, it is the love of country which makes me recount these grievances. Remember!"

In such manner did the Sinhalese leaders kindle the patriotic fervour in the hearts of the people. But it was a losing game, and finally the Sinhalese were overwhelmed.

Portuguese Rapacity

The Portuguese policy in Lanka was governed by territorial ambition, commercial greed and the desire of religious proselytism. Every pagan was looked upon as an enemy of Portugal and of Jesus. This policy was prosecuted with the "rapacity, bigotry and cruelty which characterised every stage of its progress in the East," says, Sir Emerson Tennent, and this would almost be incredible if there was not the testimony of their own historians. They converted the Hindus in the North in their time-honoured fashion and established themselves, for the glory of their religion, as close to the pearl fisheries as possible before paying court to the rest of the Island.

These ruthless marauders, following the vandalistic traditions of Europe, destroyed the Vihara at Kelaniya, sacred to Buddhists as the place sanctified by a visit of the Buddha, and the grandeur of which had been sung by Totagamuve Sri Rahula Thero in the *Selalihini Sandesa*. The Devale of Vishnu, the patron deity of Lanka, at Devi Nuvara, then the most sumptuous temple in Ceylon, built on vaulted arches, on a promontory overlooking the sea, with towers elaborately carved and roofed with gilded copper and serving as a landmark to the mariners of every nation who sailed the waters of the Indian Ocean, was sacked and razed to the ground.

Percival, referring to Portuguese barbarity in Ceylon, comments: "Not only was any little wealth that the Sinhalese possessed

seized by the rapacious grasp of avarice ; their manners and customs were trampled upon ; their religious opinions, which they could still less give up, were not only insulted, but even persecuted with the most wanton cruelty. The Portuguese government in Lisbon was still weak enough to listen to the arguments of the priests who maintained that imposing the Christian religion by means of the Inquisition was the only sure method of securing their dominion."

When, however, it generally became apparent that the more crude methods of religious coercion, as practised by the Popish priests in Europe and elsewhere, tended to frighten away the "heathens" from the "solaces of Christianity"—for the Sinhalese looked with horror on strange gods who seemed to delight in blood—subtler methods of Christianising came into vogue. In 1546 John III of Portugal, in a letter to the Viceroy of Goa, laid down the principle that "pagans may be brought over to our religion not only by the hopes of eternal salvation, but also by temporal interest and preferment." Accordingly those who professed Christianity were to be "provided with places in the Customs, to be exempted from impressment in the Navy, and sustained by the distribution of rice out of the public revenue."

This campaign was started in real earnest, with the proverbial casuistry of the Jesuits brought into full play, and active aid given by the civil power. But at the close of the Portuguese rule, the results in terms of converts were hardly commensurate with the immense labour and money expended. The religious intolerance and administrative oppression of an enervated Portuguese Government alienated the subject Sinhalese population, whose thoughts consequently turned towards the monarch of their own race. Rebellion weakened, and Kandyan hostility distracted, Portuguese power. Their career of conquest was checked, and their territories expanded and contracted as their power waxed and waned, and with the fall of Jaffna on 24th June, 1658, the Portuguese were completely expelled from the Island.

"They had found in Ceylon," says Dr. Paul E. Pieris, "a contented race and fairly prosperous country, with a system of Government regulated by clearly defined and universally accepted customs, and it is melancholy to reflect that they succeeded in producing nothing but chaos. Out of a long list of high-born *Hidalgos* whom Portugal sent to Ceylon, it is difficult to point to one name as that of an enlightened statesman and high-principled administrator. Except for the seeds of Christianity, which were sown among the

population of the coast, and their language, which has curiously enough survived among the descendants of those who took their place, the era of the Portuguese has passed away like a nightmare.

"No stately fabric remains as compensating gain for that religious fanaticism, to which ample witness is borne by the desecrated ruins of those lovely structures which the piety of generations had strewn broadcast over the country. No great monument exists to perpetuate their name. No principle of legislation which is in operation today, derives its origin from the epoch of their rule. Their bequest to the Dutch was a colony of half-castes, a failing agriculture, a depopulated country and a miserable and ill-conditioned people."

"They had in Ceylon," Dr. Pieris concludes, "an opportunity almost unique in the experience of European nations in the East, but their moral fibre had proved unequal to the occasion."

(4) The Sway of the Hollanders

THE Dutch succeeded to the Portuguese. Their overlordship, which commenced with treachery, endured till 1796. The Dutch obtained the help of Raja Sinha II to capture the Portuguese territories, with the promise of surrendering the territories so captured, in return for a monopoly of the export trade of the country. But the treacherous Dutch did not fulfil the condition stipulated in their treaty. Thus, though the Dutch began their conquest of the Portuguese in the name of the Sinhalese King, they soon discarded that pretence, and the faithless Hollanders, who began as auxiliaries and allies, soon became traitors and ended their career as masters.

During the Dutch administration, the maritime provinces recovered considerably from their decline under the Portuguese. The constant wars of the latter were replaced by substantial peace. The Dutch have left behind them in Ceylon a system of canals in the Western Province, the principles of the Roman-Dutch Law and a Burgher population, and, last but not least, their Parish School system, which was a source of extensive proselytising through education. Allied to this was their different edition of the Christian Bible.

They found it "expedient to exert, if not open coercion, at least some gentle violence to quicken the apprehension of the natives". With this view a proclamation was made that no 'native' "could aspire to the rank of Modeliar, or even be permitted to farm land or hold office under Government, who had not first undergone the

ceremony of Baptism, become a member of the Protestant Church, and subscribed to the Doctrines contained in the Helvetic Confessions of Faith," says Emerson Tennent. "And," continues the same writer, "many of the low-land Chiefs, landowners, those who aspired to be petty headmen, and police vidanes of their villages, even the Brahmins of Jaffna and Mannar, unwilling to forego the prospects of dignity and emolument, which were attainable upon such easy conditions, made a ready profession of Christianity, although forced to lay aside the beads and other symbols of heathenism."

The Buddhist Spirit of Tolerance

In conspicuous contrast to the bigotry and intolerance of the Portuguese and their successors, the Dutch, is the gracious act of Narendra Sinha, (1707—1739), King of Kandy, who intervened on behalf of a Roman Catholic priest, Father Francisco Gonsalves, who was taken a prisoner by the Dutch for trespassing on Dutch territory, an offence punishable with death. The king sent an embassy to the Dutch Governor, demanding the liberation of the Catholic priest, and the Dutch Council, solely out of respect for "His Imperial Majesty," liberated the Catholic priest, who was preaching, the Dutch alleged, "a noxious doctrine, which was doing great harm to the Realms of both His Imperial Majesty and that of the Company."

This action of the Sinhalese king was not an isolated gesture, but represented yet another manifestation of the spirit of tolerance which governed the attitude of Buddhist rulers towards alien faiths. "This precept," says Marco Pallis in *Peaks and Lamas*, "which goes back to the times of the Buddha, has been faithfully observed by His followers, with few exceptions, and makes Buddhist history pleasanter reading than the grim records of the more militant religions. The spirit of the Gospel ought, one would think, to have been enough to restrain the growth of bigotry; but, unfortunately, like a noxious weed which, though uprooted, leaves its seeds in the soil, the sectarian spirit germinated afresh from the exaggerated distinction, made between Chosen People, privileged by right of membership, and heathens or even dissident Christians: between the unregenerate and those who fancied themselves 'saved'. Hatred, masquerading in its new-fangled dress of righteous indignation against error, found a way of playing the yoke-fellow to Christian love. The resurrection of bigotry followed close upon the Resurrection of Christ Himself."

The Dutch and Proselytization

The Portuguese had already made use of education for purposes of proselytization. When the Dutch came, "education," says Emerson Tennent, "was made available for pioneering the way for the preaching of Christianity. The school house in each village became the nucleus of a future congregation ; and here, while the children received elementary instruction, they and the adults were initiated in the first principles of Christianity. Baptism was administered and marriages solemnized in the village school-houses, and in order to confer every possible importance on these rural institutions, the school-masters appointed by the Scholarchial Commission had charge of the *thombos* or registers of the district."

The most remarkable feature in the system was that the attendance of the pupils was compulsory and enforced by the imposition of fines upon parents. But in spite of all efforts, in 1680, according to the report of the Chaplain of Galle, "idolatry was on the increase," so much as to render him doubtful of the propriety of baptizing the children of the natives "lest that which is holy be given unto dogs."

The number of these 'converts' must have been very large, for they ordained that nobody could get employment unless he professed the Christian faith, and no marriage would be registered except between Christian parties. What particular pleasure the Dutch invaders took in this form of conversion it is difficult to gather, but it may have been necessary to keep the Dutch home government in humour by reports of the vigour with which their religion was being pushed, so that the local Governors and other officers might carry on their trade of oppression and misappropriation of revenue unmolested.

These two missionary efforts had been so 'successful' that we find that in 1801, out of a total population of one and a half millions, there were 342,000 Protestants and a large number of Catholics. But in 1921, with the total population increased three times to four and a half million, the Christians of all denominations amounted to only 443,000, of whom only 74,900 were Protestants.

That was the policy of the Dutch in Ceylon. In the latter years of the eighteenth century, however, the Company's government in Ceylon became moribund and effete. Portuguese influences, a lethargic and corrupt officialdom, the concentration on private profit, nepotism and favouritism, a precarious financial system, a vexatious system of taxation, laws of unnecessary severity, were the signs of the intrinsic weakness and the hastening decay of Dutch

power in Ceylon. Thus it is no matter for wonder that the Dutch power in Ceylon collapsed at the first touch of the advancing Britisher.

The Hollander Duped and Ousted

The British occupation of the Dutch possessions in the maritime provinces of Ceylon in 1796, followed directly from the course of European politics. The Hollanders found themselves entangled in Europe in Napoleonic tentacles, and the Prince Stadtholder had to flee to England for protection. With the concurrence of the Stadtholder, and under the "guarantee of their being restored to the Republic at the conclusion of a general peace," the British took possession of the Dutch Settlements in Ceylon.

At the Peace of Amiens, in 1802, the British, who had been holding maritime Ceylon in trust for the Dutch since 1796, found themselves negotiating, not with the Stadtholder of an independent Holland, but with France, the occupying power of a dependent and puppet Dutch republic. Napoleon Bonaparte had made himself "Trustee" of the Dutch nation. Thus, it resulted that Ceylon became a pawn in a world-wide haggling game between two Great Powers. So the Hollanders learned, too late, the moral of the old Sinhalese saying: "Like the iron kept for safe custody being grabbed by the custodian."

The Hollanders duped Raja Sinha to get possession of maritime Ceylon. Now we see them duped, dispossessed and ignored in their turn, by two selfish Great Powers. Such was the inglorious end of the sway of the Hollanders in Ceylon.

(5) *The Last Phase*

WHENEVER an invader was found to be too powerful to overcome, the Sinhalese withdrew from the danger-zones to the safer highlands where they kept the Lion Flag flying, until sufficient resources were collected for the ultimate expulsion of the aggressor.

With the advent of the Westerners, who were armed, not with bows and arrows as of old, but with new machines of destruction, the Sinhalese found this ancient haven, the mountainous barriers of the highlands, the safest and most effective retreat from which to keep the ruthless new aggressors at bay. And when the maritime provinces were crushed by the weight of foreign aggression, and went under the sway of alien domination, the Sinhalese betook

themselves permanently to the impregnable fastnesses of their hills.

The Malwana Convention, which ratified the donation of the maritime provinces to the Portuguese by Dharmapala (1551—1597), opened a new chapter in the country's history. With that event the Sinhalese in the highlands—*Kanda Uda-Rata*—asserted their sovereignty as a distinct political entity, and all true Sinhalese rallied to its banner like children of the same parents.

On the death of Raja Sinha I (1554—1593) of Sitavaka, Senkadagala-nuvara (Kandy) became the 'Chungking' of Free Lanka, and the monarchs, following Vimala Dharma Suriya I (1591—1604), who wielded the sceptre of the Kandyan Kingdom, became the rallying-point of all the Sinhalese to whom the very name of the Portuguese had by now become odious and abhorrent.

Raja Sinha of Kandy

In 1636 Senarat, who had succeeded Vimala Dharma Suriya died, and Maha-Asthana, who had been administering the government for some years, was proclaimed king as Raja Sinha II (1636—1687), the last great Sinhalese monarch. He continued the national struggle against the Portuguese, and was the hero of Gannoruva, the last great battle of the Sinhalese race, commemorated in the *Parangi Hatana*, which rings with the passion of Pindar and is reminiscent of Miltonic tones in the resounding roll of its names.

Historians differ materially as to the numbers of the invading army—Ribeiro and Botelho stating that it was composed of seven hundred Europeans, and twenty-eight thousand Indians; while Valentyn affirms that it consisted of two thousand three hundred Europeans and half-castes, with six thousand Kaffirs. But be the number what it might, it is certain that a large army, commanded by Don Diego de Melho, did penetrate into the interior, and, after ransacking Kandy, retired to Gannoruva. Here Raja Sinha surrounded them with his forces, put them all to death by the sword, and subsequently cut off their heads and piled them up in pyramidal form, as a warning to all aggressors; and history asserts that only eight-and-thirty Europeans escaped to tell the tale.

Narendra Sinha, the Last Vijayan

None of Raja Sinha's successors were able to rally the country to their standards, and the nation sped along the path of progressive deterioration. Decadence was the key-note of the times. The rule of the national dynasty ended with Narendra Sinha (1731—1739), and a dynasty descended from the brother of his queen,

who came from the line of Vijayanagar kings, henceforth filled the Sinhalese throne. The Sangha degenerated till the *Upasampada*, the higher ordination, became unknown. Of literary activity, there was nothing. The nation seemed as if engulfed in a sea of despair.

Kirti Sri, the Revivalist

The tide was stemmed by Kirti Sri Raja Sinha (1747—1780), the second of the South Indian line, who sent ambassadors to Siam to invite bhikkhus to restore the higher ordination, and who thus brought about a religious revival through the unremitting and indefatigable labours of Venerable Velivita Sri Saranankara Thero, the last Sangha Raja of Ceylon. Rajadhi Raja Sinha (1780—1798), the brother and successor of Kirti Sri, was a scholar himself, and his reign saw the efflorescence of poetry, though not of a very high order, but comparable with that of the Dambadeni or Sitavaka periods.

Sri Vikrama, the Last

His successor, the ill-fated Sri Vikrama Raja Sinha (1798—1815), was destined to be the last of the royal line which had ruled the country for nearly two thousand four hundred years.

Up to the time of Sri Vikrama Raja Sinha, the British, who had succeeded the Dutch in the maritime provinces, had not interfered in the politics of the Sinhalese Kingdom of the hill country, except in so far as their trading interests were concerned. Mr. North, the first British Governor of the maritime provinces, received instructions to extend the sphere of British interests, and he therefore initiated secret conversations with Pilima Talauwe, the First Adigar of the King. The main object of this manoeuvre, which reflected little credit on Governor North's integrity, was to incite the king to senseless acts of cruelty in order to dishonour him in Sinhalese eyes, and also to urge him to an act of aggression which could give the English an excuse to seize the kingdom of Kandy.

These intrigues were eminently successful. Sri Vikrama Raja Sinha, exasperated by the alternate threats and cajoleries of Governor North and the Adigar, committed the "desired act of aggression." War was at once declared, and General Macdowall occupied Kandy with three thousand men. When Lieut-Colonel Barbut's Trincomalie detachment reached Kandy on March 22, 1803, they found the capital deserted. His Majesty had fled. Fire had

damaged his palace. The Sinhalese king's Cabinet had evacuated the city according to plan. A citizenless Kandy awaited the invaders. Governor North did not enjoy the fruits of this Machiavellian victory, since on 24th June, 1803, the Adigar massacred the English troops stationed in Kandy and restored Sri Vikrama to the throne.

But Pilima Talauwe was himself ambitious to be king and, instead of seizing the Crown, conspired to do away with Sri Vikrama. His plots were discovered, and he was pardoned on two occasions, but when he was accused a third time, the king ordered his execution.

Pilima Talauwe was succeeded by his nephew, Ehelepola, who was cleverer and more resourceful than his uncle, and as he too began to plot against the king, Sri Vikrama lost his balance of mind through constant fear of assassination. When in 1814 a rebellion broke out in Sabaragamuva and Ehelepola was implicated in it, the king ordered the Adigar to return to the capital; but Ehelepola knew the fate that awaited him and fled to the British in Colombo. The king dismissed him from his high office, confiscated his lands and cast his wife and children into prison. Sri Vikrama heard that he was preparing to invade the kingdom and ordered the chieftain's wife and children to be put to death, according to the established law and custom in respect of hostages.

British Intrigue

The exigencies of the Napoleonic wars in Europe prevented the British from embarking upon an open career of conquest. Hence they resorted to the wily way of spreading disaffection, inducing disunity, and hatching conspiracy in the Kandyan kingdom. In 1815, the British, having recently vanquished Napoleon, now felt encouraged to encompass the extinction of Sinhalese rule. A large force was therefore collected, and under the plausible excuse of the invitation of a few disgruntled elements of the Kandyan Chieftains, invaded the Sinhalese kingdom—the last outpost of Sinhalese independence.

On 10th January, 1815, when the march to Kandy with Ehelepola began, General Brownrigg issued a proclamation declaring: "Led by the invitation of the Chiefs and welcomed by the acclamations of the people," the British had invaded Kandy. The reasons for the invasion were next stated in that document to be the "unanimous and direct demand of the people of five Provinces, constituting more than one-half of the Kandyan Kingdom, to be taken under British protection."

The British official who concocted this Proclamation could possibly have been Goebbels in one of his previous births, since it is the very crudest of propaganda and the most bare-faced of lies. Every schoolboy now knows that the preamble of this British proclamation was cribbed, word for word, from one of Napoleon's proclamations issued prior to one of his invasions.

The Sinhalese during their long history at no time sank so low as to welcome an invader of their country with *magul bera* and *pavada*. In Churchill's graphic words, they struggled on to the end. They fought on the seas and oceans; they defended this little Island of theirs, whatever the cost; they fought on the beaches, they fought in the fields and in the streets, they fought in the hills and they never surrendered. Here we have to part with Mr. Churchill's company. For when he goes on to declare that "if this Island (meaning England) or a large part of it were subjugated and starving, then our Empire beyond the seas, armed and guarded by the British fleet, would carry on the struggle until, in God's good time, the New World, with all its powers and might, steps forth to the rescue and the liberation of the Old."—he is speaking of things which were not available to the Sinhalese.

When the Sinhalese went under, fighting with their backs to the hills, they had no Empire or a God or a New World to rescue and liberate them. What our forefathers did when confronted with such a situation, the great Portuguese historian, Fernao de Queyroz, in his monumental work, *Conquista de Ceylao*, or "*The Spiritual and Temporal Conquest of Ceylon*," relates: "Because the Viceroy (Don Jeronimo de Azevedo) was well aware of the disorders of the soldiers as well as of the settlers of Ceylon, he gave fresh orders to repress robberies, outrages and insolences, for it was well known that it was these things that sharpened the enemy's (Sinhalese) steel most, and that the hatred of the Chingalaz (Sinhalese) would not have been so great, had not great wrongs been done to them, not only by poor soldiers who always arrogate to themselves the privilege of being masters of other people's things under the discipline of hunger, but even by the very lords of the villages who were tyrants therein, and the one and the other made the name of the Portuguese detested by the violence of their adulteries and debaucheries to the great affliction of that proud nation who would rather live in the jungles and mountains in the company of beasts than put up with such brutality as we shall see later in its proper place".

Yes, our forefathers were content to go back into the jungles and the mountains and preferred the company of the beasts to the

company of invaders who came to ravage their people and their land. At no time in the whole 2,400-year period of their history did they ever welcome an invader of their country. To such depths they never sank.

Sri Vikrama Raja Sinha, finding the situation hopeless, abandoned the capita and fled to Medamahanuvara, where he took refuge in the house of a peasant. He was pursued and captured. A petty chief ordered the rabble, who had hounded down Sri Vikrama, to "truss him like a pig," and it was done. Little did the tormentors of Sri Vikrama realize that he was the symbol of their own national freedom, and that in putting fetters on him they were not binding him but strangling their own liberty.

End of Sinhalese Independence

With Sri Vikrama ended not only the last vestige of national freedom, but also a civilization based on an entire and unique ethico-religious social philosophy, a civilization which had endured for twenty-four centuries, and which, at some periods of its long and chequered career, had outshone even those of great empires elsewhere, because of the benevolent and sagacious guidance of the ruling class by the Sangha, who incessantly strove to make the people prosperous and happy within the wide boundaries of their national culture.

Foes from without, traitors from within, intrigues from within and without, a hostile aristocracy, and an alienated priesthood, all these have been assigned at one time or another by different writers as the causes of the tragedy of 1815. While some of these factors undoubtedly played their part in that tragedy, we believe the chief cause which brought about the downfall of the Sinhalese Kingdom was the disunity of the people themselves. "It was a repetition of an old and tragic tale," says Dr. Colvin R. de Silva in his *Ceylon under the British Occupation*. "The Kand'yans turned with a too facile readiness to the idea of bringing in the foreigner to settle their domestic differences. That pitcher went once too often to the well. The convenient arbitrator became the permanent master. The Kand'yans accomplished their own political doom."

Thus ended Sinhalese Independence, which our forefathers, with their toil and sweat, and blood and tears, had protected for 2358 years. Although the word 'tragic' is frequently used to describe the happenings of 1815, it is not possible to call those happenings 'tragic,' for tragedy implies at least the dignity of fate. And

there was no dignity in what happened in 1815, and nothing of fate that the leaders of the people brought upon the nation. The epoch that was closed in 1815 was more shameful than tragic.

On the 2nd March, 1815, the Lion Flag, which Vijaya had planted on our shores at Tambapanni, and which had waved in one or another part of the country throughout twenty-four centuries, was finally hauled down, and the Sinhalese, who participated in that national ignominy, participated in what in effect were the obsequies of their people as a free nation. In wending their way to their homes after the event, they virtually walked to their chains. To those others who had stood without, the question that then confronted them was the same that had previously, at some critical periods of our history, confronted our forefathers, *viz.* "Are we at the end of an adventure or the beginning of an epoch?"

Meanwhile the tropical jungle crept over the "Dead Cities," uninhabited villages, breached tanks, and abandoned paddy fields, and enveloped within itself the remains of a civilization, which, with all its ups and downs, had continued to flourish for nearly twenty-four centuries. And tumbled amidst the wilderness were stone images of the great World-Mentor, whose sublime calm, which, Fa Hien said, had "an appearance of solemn dignity which words cannot express," reminded man that unhappiness was due to insatiate desire. Round the colossal stupas, and over monolith and moonstone, the jungle grew, covering them with a carpet of soft grass and a canopy of leaf, to hide, as it were, from future eyes, the story of man's past sorrows.

Tree roots writhe like serpents through mediaeval court-yards and, having split huge stones asunder, now hold them suspended as a proof of their power. Tiny tendrils, which first lay soft on the breasts of smiling *devīs*, reaching behind their narrow waists, tore the celestial show-girls from niches where the Sinhalese had enshrined them, and won them for the unrelenting jungle.

Dead stones, vivified by the nameless artists of a vanished civilization, still echo the sculptured tramp of marching elephants. The smiling faces of *devatas* have a sphinx-like fascination which resists the ravages of time. More charming still are the bands of merry little dwarfs who play and dance round the capitals of stone pillars and in the friezes round viharas. Guard-stones, sculptured with multi-hooded coiled *nagas*, remind us of the aboriginal cult of serpent worship, which has lived on through Hindu and Buddhist rites and has persisted from the remote age of credulity to that of scepticism.

And *Apsarasas* are there, perfect in beauty and potent in lure, sent to earth to rob saintly ascetics of the spiritual perfection towards which they have striven through self-denial and meditation. The *Rig Veda* and the *Brahmanas* contain many legends of these demi-mondaines who traffic their charms between heaven and earth. A large number of them enliven the Sigiriya frescoes. These gay *Apsarasas*, with their elongated eyes, bulbous breasts, willowy waists and lissom limbs, painted many centuries ago, are as supple and spirited as their breathing sisters in cloth of gold.

“Now,” said John Still of the Ceylon Civil Service, in a Broadcast Talk from the B.B.C., “all this Art died or nearly died. The motive went,” he added, “Buddhist Kings began to be succeeded by Christian Governors.”

The “Dead Cities,” the stage on which the Sinhalese enacted their drama of life for two thousand five hundred years, hold their breath, as if in awe at the tragic downfall of their actors.

But, their hearts still beat.

Chapter III

UNDER THE BRITISH YOKE

(1) *The Struggle for Freedom*

THE news of the downfall of the Sinhalese Kingdom was brought to General Brownrigg when he was at dinner with other military officials at his camp while he was en route to Kandy. It is said that he instantly stood up, and before he could utter a word, tears began to roll down his cheeks.

Those tears were not tears of sorrow for the Sinhalese over the loss of their national freedom after 2358 years of Independence. They were tears of joy and thanks to the Almighty—the “Supreme Dispenser”—for conferring on the Britishers the singular blessing of making them masters of the whole of Lanka, a boon that had been denied to so many other nations of the East and West through twenty centuries. The Almighty has been pleased to dispense to man, especially to the white of the species, queer things in the course of history.

“It can readily be seen,” says Marco Pallis in *Peaks and Lamas*, “how convenient these theories must have proved, when they first came into vogue, in furnishing excuses for every brutal act of brigandage, political or commercial. They seemed to set the seal of the Almighty’s approval on the sordid tale of grab and exploitation. The victims were beaten, therefore their defeat was a just defeat, their loss a public gain. More tender consciences consoled themselves with the pious thought that the Almighty had given them a commission to govern all ‘inferior’ or ‘native’ peoples for their good ; they even went so far as to dress up this duty in the garb of self-sacrifice, as expressed in the famous phrase ‘The White Man’s Burden’, surely the most smug and hypocritical that has ever passed human lips.”

Pliny has recorded that the Sinhalese Ambassador, from the Court of Anuradhapura, sat on the right of Claudius Caesar, when captives from England, among whom were Caradoc and Caractacus, two early kings of Britain, were paraded in procession past the Roman Emperor. The position was now almost reversed—the men of the older culture and civilization became virtually the slaves to the people whom they had looked down upon some 2000 years previously.

Such is the Buddha's *Asta-Loka Dharma*, which compares the "ups and downs" of human experience to a wheel's action. The Buddha said: "Suffering is common to all; life is a wheel; good fortune is unstable; and gain (*lābho*), and loss (*alābho*); fame (*vaso*), and disgrace (*ayaso*); adulation (*pasamsā*), and insult (*nindā*); joy (*sukham*), and sorrow (*dukkham*); revolve with the wheel of life." The Goddess of Fortune slowly turns the wheel, to which the helpless victims are bound, the slave in his hour of triumph treads down the crowned King beneath him. This is one of the oldest ideas in popular philosophy, and is so apt that it has commended itself to the human intelligence from time out of mind. When Goethe said: "You must rise or you must fall. You must rule and win, or serve and lose, you must suffer or triumph, you must be anvil or hammer," he used an expression in harmony with this idea of the revolving wheel of fate, to the crest of which, for one brief breathless moment, each of us is elevated.

On the 2nd of March, 1815, was enacted, in the Hall of Audience of the Kandyan Kings, that splendid and historic farce of signing the Convention. General Brownrigg and his confederates never meant to observe its conditions. The only redeeming feature of this pantomime was Article 5, which guaranteed the inviolability of the National Religion and the "protection and maintenance of its rites, priests and temples." Even that guarantee may have been inserted to throw dust in the eyes of the Sangha—the hereditary guardians of the life and liberty of the people of Lanka. "In truth," the General wrote in a despatch to Secretary of State Bathurst, "our secure possession of the country hinged upon this point. I found it necessary to quieten all uneasiness respecting it, by an article of guarantee couched in the most unqualified terms," and he repeated these assurances to the Sangha of Malvatta and Asgiriya Viharas. But in fact, as will appear, the assurances were, in the event, not carried out.

"It is not sufficient that a Government is just," remarks Marshall in his *Conquest of Ceylon*, "it must also be palatable." Although the Chiefs and the people had combined to rid themselves of Sri Vikrama Raja Sinha, they were even more unanimous in their antipathy to the British. Rulers and ruled differed in race, language, religion, customs, habits and modes of thought; there was between them no sympathy or common interest, and no circumstances to draw or bring them together; whereas there were innumerable causes that kept them apart.

“The historic submission of the Kandyan to a despotism provided no solid background for expecting their equally implicit acquiescence in the new government,” writes Dr. Colvin R. de Silva in his *Ceylon under British Occupation*. “The Kandyans,” he says, “had called in the Britisher for the sole purpose of ridding themselves of an unpopular monarch, and they had not contemplated the establishment or continuance of British rule. ‘You have now,’ said one, ‘deposed the King, and nothing more is required—you may now leave us.’ This remark exactly defines what was the Kandyan attitude.....

“The Chiefs were disappointed and discontented. The Sangha was even more dissatisfied. The ascendancy of a Christian government in the Kandyan provinces constituted a distinct menace to Buddhism. The projected establishment of an English Seminary at Kandy for the Western education of the children of the Chiefs further inculcated the fear of proselytism. The politic patronage of a Christian government was hardly a satisfactory substitute for that of a Buddhist King, nor could the former take the intimate part in Buddhistic rites, ceremonies and processions which the latter had naturally performed. It was with difficulty that the Sangha was induced to bring back to Kandy that most sacred symbol of Buddhism, the Tooth Relic. The Sangha was never fully reconciled to the new regime.....

“Neither were the people. The reason was their natural hatred of a foreign yoke. Trained in three centuries of hostility to the European governments of the maritime provinces, and cherishing the independence which they had so long preserved, it was hardly to be expected that they could immediately shed their prejudices and readily adjust themselves to a different scheme. The ancient despotism had generally been exercised in accordance with numerous recognised usages. To this despotism the British government succeeded, but it was unaware of the exact niceties of customary usage..... ‘British rule in the Kandyan country,’ said a Headman, ‘was as incompatible as yoking a buffalo and a cow in the same plough’.....Apprehensive for their religion and anxious about their customs, the inhabitants were little disposed to favour the new regime.”

Unanimous as was this antipathy, unfortunately it lacked an effective rallying point. Nevertheless, the rebellion of 1818 arose and nearly eclipsed the new rule. The rising was brutally suppressed by the British, most of the rebels were slaughtered, their barns

plundered, their belongings stolen, their homes burnt, their crops ready for harvesting destroyed by getting elephants to trample on them, and the tanks that watered their paddy fields deliberately breached, so that even their families, who had abandoned their homes on the approach of the British troops, might themselves die of privation and starvation.

“To plunder, to slaughter, to steal, these things they misname empire; and where they make a desert, they call it peace.”

If one is asked who uttered these words, the name that will flash into one's mind will be that of Mr. W. Dahanayake, the member for Bibile in the defunct State Council, in which constituency one may still see the charred remains of the houses burnt by the British. It is not surprising, however, to learn that those words were used by a Briton—Calgacus, in addressing his fellow Britons at the battle of the Grampians, and referred to the Romans. Did ever those simple Britons then visualise that their own descendants, seventeen centuries later, would be committing the same atrocities which had been perpetrated against them by the Romans, to a people who were at the zenith of their glory at the time Calgacus addressed his people?

Keppetipola and Madugalle who had led the rising were captured and beheaded, in public, before the Temple of the Sacred Tooth. A most appropriate place, we think, for patriots to lay down their lives for the freedom of their country. The most pathetic figure in this first great convulsion to throw off the British yoke was Ehelepola, who wished to be known as “the friend of the British.” He was taken prisoner and deported to Mauritius where he died in 1829.

History will ever wrangle with the question: Was Ehelepola a patriot or a traitor? After all, does it matter which, when one knows that the dividing line between the two is very thin indeed. Ehelepola sought the help of the English to end what seemed to him an intolerable situation—an alien on Vijaya's throne. He thought the English would be as magnanimous as the French had been to American colonists. But fate decided otherwise.

If Washington had failed, history would have recorded a rebellion in a British colony, and a traitor by the name of George Washington being hanged from a tree. As fate decided otherwise, we now hear of a great War of Independence and of a patriot by the name of

General Washington. And, today, the direct successor of Washington, President Franklin Roosevelt, is considered to have been the world leader in the cause of freedom, with Britain as his junior partner. The unsuccessful strugglers against tyranny have been the chief martyrs of treason laws in all countries. As an epigram of Sir John Harrington goes:

“Treason doth never prosper, what’s the reason ?
For if it prosper, none dare call it Treason.”

Justice Lawrie, Senior Puisne Justice of Ceylon, in *A Gazetteer of the Central Province of Ceylon*, writes : “It has been assumed by many writers that Ehelepola’s ambition was to be raised to the Kandyan throne by the help of the English troops. It is said that was his main object in persuading General Brownrigg to invade the country.

“I do not know that there is foundation for this, but if such was his policy, it may be that he was a more able statesman than the Englishmen with whom he had to deal.

“If Ehelepola had been raised to the throne as a king dependent on England, with a resident English garrison at once to support and to control him, the Kandyans might possibly have been spared the horrors of the insurrection of 1818 and the cruelty of its suppression by the English. The country might have flourished under a native ruler of no mean capacity, whose worst tendencies might have been corrected and his best fostered by English aid.

“The story of English rule in the Kandyan country during 1817 and 1818 cannot be related without shame. In 1819 hardly a member of the leading families, the heads of the people, remained alive ; those whom the sword and the gun had spared, cholera and smallpox and privations had slain by the hundred.

“The subsequent efforts of Government to rule and assist its Kandyan subjects were, for very many years, only attempts begun and abandoned. Irrigation and education did not receive due attention. The descendants of the higher classes of the Kandyan times rapidly died out, the lower classes became ignorant and apathetic.

“If Ehelepola had reigned, much that must now be regretted might have been avoided, but fate decided otherwise.”

The “cruelty of the suppression” of the rising “cannot be related without shame,” says this high-souled Englishman. We ask, what was the crime the Sinhalese committed to be subjected

to such atrocities ? They did what the peoples of occupied Europe during World War II were officially asked, day and night through the B.B.C., to do—"to throw off the invader." Of course the excuse, "different times," might be trotted out. But there is a discordant note in this "different times, different songs" melody.

At this period, when the British were treating the Sinhalese with such brutality, they were acting quite the other way in another part of the world. During these very times the British were helping with money, arms and munitions the peoples of the Balkans—the Greeks, the Bulgarians, the Rumanians, and the Serbians—to throw off the Turkish yoke. They were not only helping these peoples thus, but were also exerting strong diplomatic pressure on the Sultan and the Porte, to free them.

Are there then two different kinds of freedom—one for the white ones and another for the coloured ? According to Churchill's interpretation of the Atlantic Charter, there seem to be two. When Churchill brought back the Charter, he hastened to explain that clause 3 did not in any way qualify British policy as regards her dependencies. Churchill said that it was primarily concerned with "the restoration of the sovereignty, self-government and national life of the States and nations of Europe now under the Nazi yoke." We frankly admit, for our part, we do not know the philosophy of these Britishers. We can only reconcile their philosophy, if indeed they have one, with that of the Negro chief who said: "When I steal my enemy's wife, it is good; but when he steals mine, it is bad."

The attempts of the British to suppress the spirit of national freedom were never to succeed. The Sinhalese are closely related by race and blood to the Sikhs or Singhs of India. And the same indomitable courage, hot-bloodedness, pride, religious fervour and love of liberty which distinguishes that warrior-race are also marked characteristics of the descendants of Vijaya Singh and his followers. If, for the moment, the Britisher appeared to have reduced the Sinhalese to an abject state of servitude, the appearance was delusive in the extreme. The flame of revolt may have seemed extinguished. But the embers of disaffection smouldered in silence, and were ready to burst forth into a conflagration when the opportune moment arrived. Such an occasion arose in 1848, thirty years after the uprising of 1818.

The causes that led to the 1848 insurrection—unpopular taxes, an unjust agrarian policy and the wide-spread "injustice,

oppressions, wrongs and losses " inflicted often by the British Government upon the Sinhalese peasantry—have been elsewhere discussed. They are but an illustration of the greed and the injustice that motivated early British policy in Ceylon.

Emerson Tennent, the Colonial Secretary, had introduced certain taxes—the dog-tax, gun-tax, shop-tax and the road-tax—the last mentioned being particularly unpopular because it had to be rendered by *rajakariya* labour on the roads for six days every year and applied to all male adults, including the bhikkhus themselves. This insult to the Sangha aroused wide-spread resentment. In the Maritime Provinces the agitation took the form of protest meetings led by Mr. Elliot of the "Observer," and on one occasion Sir Emerson was stoned by the populace.

But in the Kandyan Provinces the insult to religion was further aggravated by a deeper injury in the shape of the Crown Lands Ordinance No. 12 of 1840, which dispossessed the peasant of all land except his paddy-fields and the scrap of ground on which his hut was built. The rest of the Kandyans' land was, by an ingenious process of legal quibbling, taken over by Government and sold for a song to coffee planters. Europeans and Malabar coolies now invaded "the secret haunts" of the Kandyans, disturbing their habits and interfering with their customs. The British ruler, thinking only in terms of profits, was stone-blind to the injuries he did, though even he could hardly conceal from himself the unfairness of his methods. "Prejudiced as they are and strongly tainted with pride of caste," wrote Governor Torrington in a despatch dated August, 1848, "they forget the benefits they have gained, while they remember the privilege they have lost. Abuses they have undoubtedly suffered in many cases at the hands of the newcomers."

The first sign of discontent was expressed in a peasant demonstration which occurred in Kandy in the middle of the year 1848. On the morning of 6th July, 1848, a large number of peasants swarmed round the Kandy Kachcheri, demanding to speak personally with the representative of the British Government. They were about four thousand in number. Thousands more had been stopped by armed troops at the ferries and fords of the river. The demonstrators were an unarmed but determined crowd, eager to get redress for their wrongs by the peaceful and democratic method of conference. With such intention the deputation of peasants presented Government Agent Buller with a document which

began: "In 1815 we captured and surrendered to the British the person of our late King because he oppressed us and did us injustice It appears that we are now made to suffer from year to year greater injustice, oppressions, wrongs and losses than we had ever endured under the Sinhalese Government."

Government Agent Buller, much embarrassed, appeared at last on the Octagon. He was supported by two civil servants, and the Javanese police, under the command of Dunuwille Loku Banda, was at hand ready for any eventuality. The peasants demanded an immediate answer. Buller promised to submit the matter to the Governor, Viscount Torrington, and turned to go. "Let not the white man go," cried the people, "He must give us his reply."

Two men scaled the walls of the Octagon. Loku Banda charged the crowd with his policemen. The peasants became boisterous and rough-handed the limb of the law and knocked the Superintendent down from his horse. The garrison troops were called out to disperse the crowd. This demonstration had been arranged by Golahella and by Madugalla, Rate Mahatmaya of Dumbara—perhaps the last, out of the decimated ranks of the Kandyan aristocracy, to show opposition, howsoever covert or feeble, to the will of the Britisher.

This incident of July 6th made the British rulers uneasy. The Colonial Secretary called a meeting of the people on the 8th, and of the Chiefs on the 11th. The spokesman of the people was Gunnepana Arachchi. Nothing however came of it, and the assembly dispersed with a sense of deep despair and dejection.

The time seemed ripe for rebellion. But no leader among the aristocracy could be found to guide the people and sponsor the cause. The era of national heroes, eager to sacrifice their lives for the sake of principles, seemed to have passed, for the natural leaders had either thrown in their lot altogether with the British Government or had chosen to retire into safe obscurity. Yet at Nalanda the peasants discovered a man who had the courage to lead the revolt for freedom, one Gongalagoda Banda alias Peliyagoda David, a low-country Sinhalese who hailed from Wanawahala, a part of Kelaniya, near Peliyagoda. They took him to Dambulla where they made the Nayaka Thero anoint him King.

More than 100,000 armed men commenced their march under the newly crowned "King," who appointed his brother Denis as "sub-king" and one Purang Appu, another low-country Sinhalese, as his First Adigar. Purang Appu put the new king in a

closed palanquin and conducted him to Matale. The Matale Police and the judge, Mr. Waring, excitedly sought to take action, but by the time they appeared on the scene, the insurgents had disappeared. Waring galloped on horseback to Kandy and met Government Agent Buller on the way. Together they rode to Kandy and found the planters rushing into the town in panic and demanding the immediate despatch of troops against the rebels.

Nevertheless, strange to say, the insurgents showed little disposition to throw out the Britisher by violence—so confident did they appear to believe in the sacred inviolability of justice, they thought the people had but to voice their unanimous sentiments about the election of the sovereign, when their wishes would be gratuitously fulfilled, and the British would apologetically walk out of the country. They only broke into the Court House and burnt the records which dispossessed them of their ancestral lands.

A detachment of soldiers sent to Matale under the command of Captain Watson met a crowd of people at Wariyapola Junction. Without any reason Watson ordered his troops to fire on them and himself picked off the fleeing villagers with his rifle. Flushed with "victory" at this disgraceful "Battle of Wariyapola," he hastened to Matale, where he arrested Dullewe Maha Nilame. This venerable chieftain was the last surviving signatory to the Convention of 1815. He had remained loyal to the British and had made the road from Kandy to Matale. Along this very road Watson led the eighty year old man on foot, and when he complained that he was too feeble to walk, Watson pointed to a tree and asked whether he would prefer to swing from it.

At Kurunegala the rebels elected one Hanguranketa Dingirala, sub-king of Sat Korale. They broke into the jail and released some men who had been unjustly imprisoned because they had resisted the Crown Lands Ordinance. Then they marched to the Court House and destroyed the chena land records. Soldiers from Kandy attacked the rebels and threw them out. Led by a notary, Wanduragala, they made two attempts to retake the town, which, however, only resulted in much loss of life.

And so, with these incidents at Kandy, Matale and Kurunegala, the rebellion ended. Not a single British soldier had been killed. Yet Martial Law was proclaimed in the Kandyan Provinces. Captain Watson, fresh from his "victory of Wariyapola," now started on his career of extortion, rapine, arson and blood, which made the 1848 rising notorious in history. His Death Proclamations

commanded everybody, on pain of being killed, to report where the belongings of the rebel leaders were concealed. Soldiers invaded the villages. Women were tortured to reveal where they had hidden their money and jewellery; cattle, paddy and movables were confiscated and sold, then the cottages themselves were set on fire. At times whole villages were reduced to cinders by fire.

When later, a charge of arson was brought against Captain Henderson, he proved not only that other top-ranking officers had committed the same crime, but that he had written orders from his commanding officer to support his action. Captain Watson reaped a rich harvest by extortion, forced sales of paddy fields and gardens and by contriving to sell in Madras wealthy Golahella's jewellery. Large numbers of men were charged with high treason. When the civil courts justly discharged them, Governor Torrington cursed that "traitors" should be acquitted in spite of "carefully selected juries." He ordered cases to be transferred to the Courts-Martial in order to secure a maximum number of convictions.

In Matale and Kurunegala the victims were made to stand on barrels before being executed, so that lookers-on might see their bodies tumble down. Dingirala, the "sub-king", was shot and his body hanged for four days after. Kandapola Unnanse, a bhikkhu who lived as a hermit in a forest cave, was brought to Kandy handcuffed and tried for high treason. The only evidence against him was that he had told a chieftain to be loyal to the King. He was convicted at the Courts-Martial. The Bar, deeply shocked, sent the Queen's Advocate to appeal to the Governor against the sentence. Torrington said: "By God, if all the proctors in the place said the man was innocent he shall be shot tomorrow morning." The bhikkhu, in full robes, was shot in front of the Temple of the Sacred Tooth.

As Torrington continued to wallow in his blood-bath, men like Elliot of the "Observer" and John Selby tried to see justice done. But their efforts were of no avail. Not till the end of September did Torrington stop his killings. Faced with the impossibility of getting justice in Ceylon, Elliot and Selby engaged the services of a barrister in London and had the question brought up in the British Parliament. An inquiry held by a Committee of the House of Commons, in which were included men like Gladstone, Peel and Disraeli, revealed the gruesome details of Torrington's suppression. A comparison, in Parliament, of Torrington's administration of Martial Law in Ceylon to Wellington's rule in France and Spain,

brought out the Duke's resentment. Martial Law, as Wellington saw it, was the administration of the usual laws of the land by military authorities.

The House of Commons Committee took such a serious view of Torrington's excesses that they recommended the appointment of a Royal Commission to investigate the matter on the spot. Viscount Torrington, however, happened to be a close relative of the British Prime Minister of that time, and the matter was quietly shelved. "You have only to read the pages of British Imperial history to hide your head in shame that you are British," says Sir Stafford Cripps.

George Turnour's Crown Lands Ordinance was never repealed, but continues to disgrace the Legislative Enactments of Ceylon. On the other hand, those who gave their lives in the 1848 Struggle for Freedom did achieve something. The British rulers came to realize that the Sinhalese prized their religion above all earthly things. The bhikkhus were exempted from the road-tax, and the rulers thenceforward took care at least not openly to seek the humiliation and the destruction of the Buddhist faith.

(2) *The Era of Exploitation*

"WHO are the leading men in the Island? Who are the men who have the highest stakes in the Colony? Who are the men who have come across the seas to win from the soil, and that, remember, is the mother of all wealth? The agriculturists, and I say this now to you, that if you turn to the soil. . . you will find within your reach the simplest, the happiest, the freest, and the most independent life known to mankind."

So said Sir Henry Blake, Governor of Ceylon, when addressing the students at the Royal College prize distribution on 12th August, 1904.

From time immemorial the welfare of the people of Lanka was intimately bound up with the soil of the land. It was so when, in 1505, the Portuguese first arrived in Ceylon and when, in 1815, the whole of Ceylon went under British rule.

Western adventurers braved the seas for the sake of Lanka's agricultural wealth. In the 16th century sea-faring nations were attracted to our land by its spices. "The Helen and bride in

contest of this Isle is the finest and purest cinnamon, " Baldaeus says in his *Description of Ceylon*. It was for its cinnamon and its pepper that the Portuguese, and later the Dutch, occupied the maritime districts of the Island. And it was for the same products that the British East India Company ousted the Dutch in the name of the King of Britain.

The British East India Company, after it succeeded the Dutch in 1796, in furtherance of its get-rich-quick policy, turned its attention to the two lucrative sources of revenue in the Island—the cinnamon trade and the grain-tax. The cinnamon plantations in Colombo, Kadirana, Moratuwa etc., were intensively worked by people of the Salagama caste who were held in a position of privileged slavery for the purpose. During the period 1797—1802, the Company realized from cinnamon about £30,000 per year. When in 1798 the Island was relinquished to the Crown, the Ceylon Government received £60,000 per year, which was increased to £101,000 from 1813, for 400,000 lbs. of cinnamon provided to the Company annually. The contract lasted till 1833 when the Colebrooke reforms put an end to the cinnamon monopoly. Significantly enough, however, the Government never found the way to spend even an appreciable fraction of this revenue to improve the conditions of the Sinhalese peasant.

The grain-tax was a more irregular source of income. The system of land-tenure in Ceylon was highly complicated. There were three main classes of tenures—lands held by Government and cultivated on behalf of it for a portion of the produce; non-service tenures where part of the produce was paid as tax to Government; and service-tenures where the cultivator paid the Government by *rajakariya* or personal service. The last class included *gabadagam*, or royal villages, which had supplied food for the royal household and paid for tenure by performing services; *nindagam*, which were villages gifted by the Crown to individuals such as Chiefs or Mudaliyars, and where the owner received the services of the inhabitants and also acted as their lord; and *vedavasam*, or lands given for services to the State, such as "guarding the coasts, frontiers and roads, defending the country in time of war, maintaining peace and order, carrying provisions and stores, clearing jungle, digging canals, making roads and peeling cinnamon."

The Madras Government, in its eagerness for immediate gains, abolished all these distinctions, and asked everybody to pay half the produce of their fields instead. In addition a number of new taxes

on tobacco, gaming, coconut trees and jewellery were imposed and rents were derived from fishing, salt, liquor, tolls and poll-tax. To implement this new system of taxation, Madrasis, numbering about 32,000, were imported into the country. These consisted of *amildars* (renters), *kotwal* (police) and *gumashta* (native agents). British civil servants and Madras *amildars* acted as collectors, renters and magistrates simultaneously. These harsh and unscrupulous tax-collectors appropriated, very often by torture, the major share of the peasants' crops. On the other hand, the collectors, both British and Madras, not only oppressed the people but also cheated their masters. A glaring case of embezzling was brought to light in the pearl fisheries of 1797 and 1798, where British officials, with the connivance of one Vaidyalinga Chetty, defrauded the Government of over £500,000. The revolt of 1797 and the administrative reforms of 1798 put an end to this state of affairs.

In 1802 Ceylon was made a Crown colony. The Governor, appointed by the British Government, became the chief authority in the Island, being the chief executive officer, chief judge and chief legislative authority. Under the new system the maritime provinces were divided into 8 districts, each of which was placed under an Agent, who had to see to the collection of the revenue and act as chief executive and judicial authority in his respective area. And now started that era of exploitation conducted at the expense of the majority of the Sinhalese, which, though sometimes tempered by humanitarianism, continued until the seventies, when external factors like the emergence of the middle classes and the revival of national cultures disturbed the placid indifference of the rulers, and made them conscious of the fact that, after all, they were toying with the destinies of a nation and the lives of a few million human beings.

In those early times, the British found that the chief source of revenue in the country was the grain-tax. Yet large stocks of rice had to be imported in time of famine, and famine in those times was so frequent, and starvations and disease so common, that the Sinhalese were in danger of extinction; at one time the total population being reduced to about half a million. Some of the British Governors, such as Sir William Gregory (1873--1877), tried to develop agriculture and repair the large irrigation works. But the ravages of centuries could hardly be wiped out by desultory and half-hearted attempts at improvement. The poverty-stricken and disease-ridden peasants were altogether in such a down-and-out

condition that they needed rescuing by careful planning and benevolent and enlightened legislation. The British authorities, however, were interested in exploiting the country and amassing wealth for themselves rather than in any altruistic or humanitarian motives.

The regulation prohibiting Europeans from owning land outside Colombo was repealed in 1810, and, in 1812, they were given grants of land not exceeding 4,000 acres and free from tax for 5 years. With the annexation of Kandy and the opening up of the hill-country, a vast area of fertile land was made available for private enterprise. European planters at first tried indigo, sugar, cotton and opium. In 1821, coffee was tried on the hills round Gampola and proved a success. Governor Sir Edward Barnes (1820—1830) himself led the way, opening up a coffee plantation at Gannoruwa near Kandy in 1825, and the military and civil authorities followed suit. But coffee-planting was soon found to be detrimental to the efficiency of the Civil Service, and England had to prohibit Civil Servants from engaging in private enterprise. The coffee-rush, however, like the gold-rush, caught the imagination of British adventurers, and soon numbers of them came to the Island and began to open plantations. Thousands of acres were cleared up in Dumbara, Kotmale, Pussellawa, Rakwana, Deniyaya etc. Between 1834—40 as many as 247,000 acres of Crown Land were sold at five shillings per acre, one individual alone acquiring 30,825 acres.

There was, however, not enough Crown land to go round, and the first attempt was then made to rob the peasant of his holdings. The approval of the Colonial Office was sought for Ordinance No. 5 of 1840, giving the Crown the right summarily to eject all persons in possession of lands deemed to be the property of the Crown, whatever may have been the length of such possession. Downing Street refused to sanction this dastardly attempt and returned the draft Ordinance with instructions to insert a period of limitation. Ordinance 12 of 1840 was then sent up fixing such period at 30 years. Downing Street again interfered and reduced the period to five years.

The local Government were not to be thwarted and, by the amending Ordinance No. 9 of 1841, managed to nullify the effect of these safeguards. The effect of this Ordinance was also that Civil Servants were freed of the disability affecting land.

In the same year Sir Colin Campbell (1841—1847) came out as Governor. He found the Ordinance being rigorously enforced,

the peasants' lands robbed and British Civil Servants and their countrymen dividing the spoils at five shillings an acre. Forthwith he raised the price to twenty shillings an acre. He made representations against the scandalous state of affairs, and Downing Street had once again to intervene and forbid Civil Servants buying land for agricultural purposes.

The subsequent working of this Ordinance, the uncompromising attitude at first taken up by the Supreme Court to protect the subject's rights, the Government's laments over its repeated failures, the passing of the Waste Lands Ordinance in spite of unanimous unofficial opposition when the Government was accused of being a 'highway robber,' and how that very same Supreme Court repealed its earlier judgments, are matters of more recent history.

Apart from plundering the land of peasants, the British authorities resorted to despoiling the Buddhist Temporalities. In 1853, by orders of the Secretary of State, the Ceylon Government ceased to be the official patron of Buddhism. As no successor in lieu was named, the Buddhist Temporalities, from 1853 to 1888, were in a legal 'no man's land.' Then, under the Temple Lands Registration Ordinance No. 10 of 1856, Government began to expropriate temple lands. The Land Commissioners, appointed in 1859 to administer this Ordinance, deprived the temples of 200,000 acres in the Kandy District alone. In the Kegalla District, in the Seven Korales, in Uva, Eastern and North Central Provinces and elsewhere, the woeful tale was repeated, and thousands of acres of cultivated and uncultivated land were seized by the Government, on the Commissioners declaring the absence of legal title to them. Here, again, those who were most affected by this expropriation were the peasants, as Temple lands had always been given to them on service-tenure.

Many of the evicted peasants found employment in the coffee plantations. But for some reason—perhaps because of an exaggerated sense of personal dignity, pride of race and individualism—the Sinhalese peasant does not appear to have succeeded as a labourer. In fact, as the success of the plantations depended on cheap labour, planters had to look for docile and inexpensive labour to South India. As far back as 1839 as many as 2432 South Indian labourers were working in Ceylon plantations.

With the spread of coffee estates there occurred many improvements in the country—judicial and legal reforms, the growth of English education and the Press, the establishment of a Bank and a

Chamber of Commerce and development of communications. Yet, these benefited mainly European colonists. Taxes were levied during Governor Torrington's (1847—1850) time on verandahs and shops in the Pettah, firearms, dogs, and on every able-bodied male between 18 and 60, and the proceeds were spent to provide amenities in the planting districts. The Government was concerned more with the colonizing community than with the permanent population. The peasants, as far as Government was concerned, might as well have been dead. For the white lords, the dusky natives, "living like monkeys," had almost ceased to exist. The Press devoted its attention exclusively to the needs of the Europeans.

Major Skinner, of the Royal Engineers, a conscientious Englishman, who opened the Colombo-Kandy and other roads, reported in 1833 that the condition of the peasants of North Central Province was distressing to see, and that they were being exterminated by drought and disease. From 1838 to 1848 the Island was governed by Mr. Stewart (for 3½ years), Sir Colin Campbell (for 6 years) and Lord Torrington (for 2 years). During this period there was a steady demoralisation of the people which Skinner says was attributable to five chief causes:

(1) "The desire of the Government to obtain a substantial revenue by establishing a monopoly of the trade in arrack, which led them to sell arrack farms to men who established taverns in every village of any size throughout the interior and often distributed the liquor gratuitously to make the people develop a taste for it. This had rendered a hitherto sober and thrifty people, criminal and imprudent.

(2) "The advent of capitalism and the extensive cultivation of coffee had caused villagers to abandon the cultivation of paddy and flock to the coffee plantations where they could earn money which, owing to lack of education, they devoted to intemperance and vice.

(3) "Government, by allowing public servants to cultivate coffee, had placed their interests in rivalry with their duty.

(4) "The establishment of District Courts by the Charter of 1833 in place of the old Gansabhwahas had brought into existence a large number of proctors whose constant applications for postponements in land cases and coaching up witnesses in lies had made justice expensive and uncertain. The long distances that villagers had to travel to these Courts added to their hardships.

(5) "The appointment of rankers as chief headmen."

For some time before, and especially since, Ordinance No. 12 of 1840 was promulgated, the Kandyan peasantry have been made progressively anaemic by what may best be described as an ironical conspiracy of circumstances. Before the Kandyan Kingdom passed into foreign hands the peasantry of the Wet Zone, namely, the Central, Sabaragamuwa and Uva Provinces, were literally the country's pride. They were a sturdy and—as far as can now be ascertained—a contented community whose simple needs were met from the fruits of their own labour. With the advent of the British they became serfs in their own land. Eviction from their holdings and expropriation stemmed from the foreign invasion, and unsympathetic laws thereafter set in train a process of social and economic wastage from which the community never recovered.

History shows that under the Sinhalese kings every peasant owned a plot of paddy and had title to an extent of chena sufficient to produce subsidiary food-crops for his family. Ordinance No. 12 of 1840 was the beginning of the end of all this, so much so that the Land Commission of 1928 in their fourth interim report were constrained to write: "The Crown could, if so disposed, establish a title to any land in the Kandyan Provinces not comprised in a sannas or grant, merely by proving that the land was formerly a chena."

Any thesis on the exploitation of Lanka by the British and the dispossession of the peasantry of the land, must ultimately lead to that acute controversy which Sir Hugh Clifford, Governor from 1925 to 1927, in his day sought to describe as the "parasitic-blood-battening" theory. In other words, the theory of the Sinhalese that the British plundered and dispossessed them of their lands, and that of the British, that in opening out estates, they did no more than dispossess the wild beasts of the jungle which they cleared.

The case for the British was put forcibly by Governor Clifford in his famous address on: *Some Reflections on the Land Question*. To put it briefly, he said: "The Sinhalese villagers of the Uplands of Ceylon did not lose anything by the conversion of vast areas of untrodden forest into thriving coffee estates, for, as I have shown, a process of eviction was applied only to the wild beasts of the forest, whose departure from the vicinity of the villages can hardly have been regarded by a practical people as an unmixed evil." Dealing with the charge of spoliation and expropriation, he stated:—"The speculative work of buying up doubtful titles

from villagers was, for the most part, conducted by their own countrymen (Sinhalese)." Again: "Though the British capital invested in Ceylon may pay dividends to shareholders in all parts of the world, the investment of that capital in the Island, the trade and business which it thereby created, and the annual expenditure which the working and maintenance of its properties necessitate, all contribute to the internal income of the country, add to the general wealth, and directly and indirectly benefit materially its indigenous population."

And from Sir Hugh's day to our own, this declaration of his has become the Bible to the apologists for the British, as representing the last word on the subject and the complete answer for the British colonist.

A time there was when Lanka was a self-contained political unit ; and, under the direct rule of her monarchs, who were guided by the Sangha, her economic freedom was amply assured. Then, the mobilisation of the man-power of the land, no matter for what purpose, for warfare or peaceful pursuits, was a matter of no difficulty at all. In those days an affair of State was synonymous with the interest and welfare of the people ; and in a crisis, be it political or economic, the manhood of the country responded to a call upon their time and labour with fervour and enthusiasm. And the result was that the nation advanced from success to success, from achievement to achievement.

Then came the tragic period in this island's history, when that unity of purpose and identity of interest, which stirred Sangha, King and People alike to action was ruthlessly destroyed by foes from without and treachery from within. Thus it came to pass that, with the loss of political freedom, Lanka's national consciousness vanished or became dormant.

Ribeiro, the Portuguese historian, describes with admiration the way the Sinhalese peasants, bringing their own provisions with them to the field, fought the Portuguese armies. The conditions of land tenure, which obtained in the Low-country at the time of the arrival of the Portuguese, according to the description of Ribeiro, were practically the same as those which obtained in the Kandyan Provinces when the British occupied Kandy.

In the "landlord" villages (e.g. *Gabadagam*, *Devalagam* and *Nindagam*) the position of "Paraveni Nila Karayas," except for terms of mutual interdependence, reciprocal services, and the performance of civic duties, was absolutely secure and independent.

The lord was only proprietor of "Muttettu" fields which were accurately defined, and "he could not take a spadeful of earth in the other fields which belonged to the village." Even the serf, who did the most menial and laborious services, was rewarded by land sufficient to afford him more than, or at least, a bare sustenance. This was so in the Kandyan districts even as late as 1870, as revealed by a British Commissioner's report which attests that "all such services are provided for with the utmost care."

The "Nilakaraya's" house with compound was absolutely his own. The Nilakarayas on the non-landlord villages were proprietors with the civic sense highly developed in them. The conditions enjoyed by the "Maruveni Nilakaraya" would appear to have afforded a greater sense of security and independence than those enjoyed by the "unprotected" tenants in the new Land Development Ordinance.

The manner in which the development of the planting industry, in its threefold form, has been permitted to proceed within village limits, and the failure to conserve the rights of village communities to land, appurtenant to villages, have created problems which are by no means easy of solution. In certain areas villages are hemmed in on all sides by plantations; the peasantry find their freedom of movement hampered; their pasture grounds gone, their fields silted up, room for the natural expansion of their villages there is none.

As a counter to these genuine grievances it has become the habit to plead certain advantages, such as facilities for transport, communications etc. as an adequate compensation. But these advantages are essentially indirect and out of proportion to the damage done. The direct benefits are limited to a fraction of the people who enter into business relations with planters.

Further, the major portion of the substantial profits realised from investments here, find their way into foreign lands. This clearly cannot be beneficial to Ceylon. In the light of these facts, could it be seriously contended that the sons of the soil should join in a chorus of approval of the capitalists' cry that "Capital" has enabled Ceylon to become a land flowing with milk and honey? The peasantry may instead repeat in unison the refrain, *Cui Bono*?

The effects of generations of exploitation were keenly felt during the economic depression in the early nineteen-thirties. The fall in the prices of agricultural products was indirectly of service in so far as it exposed the dangers inherent in all the available land

being parcelled out into large plantations controlled by a small handful of capitalists. The indigenous labour employed in these plantations was driven out of the estates and reduced to beggary and vagabondage, at the time of the slump in the prices of tea, rubber and coconut. Large masses of the labouring population occupied under such a system an extremely precarious position, which was distinctly inimical to the economic stability and moral health of the community.

In 1937, Dr. Das Gupta, Economic Adviser to the Ceylon Government, conducted an economic survey of the Island. Taking five villages with five hundred families in Kalutara district, he discovered that 55 per cent. of the families only earned an income ranging from Rs. 5 to Rs. 20. On the whole only 20 per cent. of the families showed an excess of income over total expenditure. The remaining 80 per cent. were deficit families. "How these deficit families maintain themselves," he said, "it is not easy to say, but their existence is one of the unpleasant discoveries of every village investigation."

The survey of four villages in the Chilaw district disclosed that 75 per cent. of the families were in the grip of debt. Also 53 per cent. of the families were landless, while another 26 per cent. held less than one acre each. "The general level of expenditure is very low," said the report. The monthly expenditure of a family of five, for instance, was Rs. 20.09, of which Rs. 14.48 was spent on food and only 75 cents on clothing. The monthly expenditure of a family of eleven was Rs. 42.88, of which food claimed Rs. 29.80 and clothing only Rs. 2. The average monthly expenditure per head of the 1,370 people living in these villages was Rs. 5.08, of which Rs. 3.32 was spent on food, 30 cents on clothing and Rs. 1.46 on other expenditure. Their estimated consumption of rice was 6,549 bushels, but the output was only 1,816 bushels. "The figures are hardly believable for an agricultural country," said Dr. Das Gupta, "for an area which claims to be agricultural it is an extraordinary measure of economic dependence and backwardness."

One of the main reasons of this dire state of poverty among the villagers is that in the early nineteenth century, under the various Land Ordinances, land was taken from the people and handed over to British colonists. From 1835 to 1838, the average annual sale of land was 6,412 acres. From 1840 to 1845 the average annual sale was 42,800 acres. In 1841 the sales reached the high figure of 78,685 acres. The rebellions of 1842 and 1848 spoke only too

eloquently of the sufferings of the Kandyan peasant, whose lands were thus taken away.

Today the wet zone is one vast tea and rubber estate. Of the 1,190,000 acres in tea and rubber, 1,160,000 acres are in the wet zone. In these same areas the land problem is most acute. Statistics show that in the R.M.'s division of the Three Korales (Kegalla District), 2,000 families have no land whatsoever; 1,000 families own less than one acre, and there are only 600 acres available for expansion in an area of 193,800 acres. In the whole district of Kegalla, where over 60,000 acres are needed, there are only 7,000 acres of Crown land available to meet the needs of a landless people. This tale can be repeated about the other areas where large estates flourish.

In the agricultural countries of the world, the average holding in acres per cultivator is: in England 27; Germany $19\frac{1}{4}$; France 15; Belgium $5\frac{1}{2}$; Bombay 12; Punjab 9; Central Provinces and Behar $8\frac{1}{2}$; Burma $5\frac{1}{2}$; Madras $5\frac{1}{2}$. In Ceylon the average holding is between $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ an acre! The ill-fed, ill-clothed, impoverished peasant of Ceylon is a hauntingly tragic picture of a people exploited for centuries by Western adventurers. It is also part of our inheritance from a century and a half of British occupation.

The peasantry of Ceylon are inheritors of great traditions and culture. Their character of independence is one which has been chastened by discipline of religion and experience of centuries, and they are courteous and conciliatory even while under wrongs. If many of the peasants have lost their lands, the blame could by no means be laid at their doors. The whirligig of "other times, other manners" has brought disaster to them.

The tragedy that befell the Sinhalese peasant was foreseen and foretold by one of those visionaries—the poets—who seem to have more vision sometimes than statesmen or politicians or financial experts. It was Oliver Goldsmith who wrote these prophetic lines some two hundred years ago: They have come exactly true in Ceylon:

" Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay;
Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade;
A breath can make them, as a breath has made:
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
When once destroyed, can never be supplied."

The exploitation of Lanka by the British was not confined to its transient material wealth, but extended also to its true material wealth, education—the human wealth. The people were starved of every knowledge by which they could have made use, to their advantage, of the remnants of land still left to them after the plunder. But they were not given access to that knowledge. This was merely an example of the general spirit of that age, by which it was not thought wrong to keep the people of the land always as ‘hewers of wood and drawers of water’ to the exploiter. What the Britisher wanted was a subservient nation and not a people able to look after themselves, because that would have been setting up a competitor to them.

And when in 1904, after more than a hundred years of British administration of the country, Governor Blake uttered the pregnant words quoted at the beginning of this sub-chapter, there was in Ceylon no Department of Agriculture at all and not a single Agricultural School, not a single School Garden nor even a simple agricultural reader—a significant commentary on the aims and purposes of British governance of our land, and an amazing contrast to the way in which, for instance, the Americans treated the Filipinos after they succeeded to Spanish rule in the Philippine Islands.

It was not as if any kind of teaching or propaganda was not being conducted in Ceylon since the British assumed control. State as well as Denominational Schools had been founded, but what was then considered more important that the Sinhalese children should learn, were the attributes of an incomprehensible Creator, and of the ‘heroes’ who won the Empire on which the sun never sets. Those Sinhalese children were made to learn by heart, for instance, the names of the numerous wives of good King Henry the Eighth and of those whose heads were chopped off by his orders, but of the constituents of the soil on which depended ‘*the simplest, the happiest, the freest, and the most independent life known to mankind,*’ they were taught nothing at all, not a word.

To repeat Governor Blake’s three questions, he asked:

- (1) “Who are the leading men in the Island ?
- (2) “Who are the men who have the highest stakes in the Colony ?
- (3) “Who are the men who have come across the seas to win from the soil.....?”

The reader will now appreciate that, in the conditions obtaining in Ceylon 45 years ago, when Governor Blake put the above questions to the students of Royal College, the answer to each of his three questions was that it was *THE BRITISHER*.

When Governor Clifford attempted to answer what he called the "parasitic-blood-battening" theory of the Sinhalese, perhaps he was unaware that the verdict had already, perhaps unwittingly, been given against the *Britisher* by one of his own predecessors.

Let us now turn our backs on this dismal picture of four decades ago, and look to the future where we are going to shape our own destiny and to become at long last masters in our own house.

It will be interesting to transcribe here, *mutatis mutandis*, what Rom Landau said for England in *We Have Seen Evil*, and note its applicability to us and to our own country:—

A better life, as we envisage it for the future, is irrevocably linked up with Nature and with life on the land. So long as we regard agriculture merely as a secondary industry and the land as a pleasant background for our holidays, such a life will remain beyond our reach.

The message of the land cannot be assessed in terms of crops and physical well-being only. It touches the very founts of man's life.

The nature of man is intimately related to Nature around. Everyone should be able to reflect in his own personality in some measure the rhythm that governs life on the land; the rhythm of night and day; the rhythm of the seasons. Urban existence has almost completely destroyed man's awareness of these rhythms and of their meaning, and has thus deprived him of the sense of unity with Nature.

If there still existed such a unity, there would be none of the loneliness that is one of the most marked features of modern psychology. Feeling a stranger in a universe which in reality should offer him all the intimacy of a home, man is afraid of solitude.

Solitude has become for him synonymous with emptiness. So he makes frantic efforts to escape from it, and seeks refuge in the opiates of noise, movement, and forced activity. Every day he invents new toys that will prevent him from being alone with himself and with his thoughts. The language of the seasons, of sky and earth, sunshine and wind, of the trees and the running waters, of the ox and of the furrow, of the plough, has become alien to him.

Yet this is the language of unity and not of separation, of eternity and not of the fleeting moment. Instead he has learned strange new words with which to describe his strange new toys made today and replaced tomorrow. While his new language loses its meaning almost as soon as it is learnt, the very sound of that other language brings real knowledge, and, to those who understand it, life itself.

If anything is essential to our Lanka of tomorrow, it is the rediscovery of the land, a new incorporation of Nature into the citizen's life.

(3) *The 1915 Riots*

THE tragedy of 1915, which was to have such vast repercussions on the nation, had remoter and more profound causes than communal friction. It was, in fact, a sudden and violent venting forth of long-suppressed emotions—a manifestation, in howsoever crude a form, of frustration and a deep-rooted religious and national awakening.

It is a curious fact that the resurgence of Sinhalese nationalism was, in every instance, inspired by, and founded upon, a revival of Buddhism. The faith of their forefathers was part and parcel of the lives of the Sinhalese. A love deeper than self-love bound them to it. The bonds were those of psychological associations and complexes, and, as such, remained dominant and ineradicable. "All their stories of home and childhood", wrote Bishop Copleston, "all their national literature, all that was grand to them in history and science, the conquests of their kings, the great buildings of their country, all were engaged in the interests of Buddhism." So that when in the second half of the 19th century, all the temporal hopes and ideals of the Sinhalese seemed extinguished and lost, when the solidarity of the nation itself was in jeopardy, that spiritual idealism, which throughout history had nourished and sustained them, came once more to their rescue.

From the early decades of the nineteenth century, revolutionary changes—social, political and economic—had occurred in Ceylon. The abolition of *rajakuriya*; the Crown Lands Ordinance; the rise of plantations; the construction of a network of roads; progress in methods of transport and communication; a new educational policy—all these and similar innovations had cumulatively helped to break down age-old traditions and give the Sinhalese first-hand experience of Western civilization and culture. But

that alien civilization, of which the logical development would have been the supersession of Sinhalese culture, carried in it the seed of decay as well as of vigour. What the nation gained in wealth and material benefits, it lost in spiritual and moral content. It readily acquiesced in the benevolent despotism of British rule. Spirited opposition gave place to "kowitz" or apathy. Since English education and the Christian faith were the keys to lucrative Government jobs, a hybrid class of half-educated, Europeanized Sinhalese was soon formed. Buddhism and the Sinhalese language, Sinhalese customs and manners, and even personal names, came to be looked down upon as the contemptible residues of oriental barbarism. Everything English and Christian was at a premium. It became the custom for Buddhists to swear on the Bible, and for some of our English-educated gentlewomen to speak of going to England as "going home"—they were mere sojourners in Lanka! It was the lowest ebb the Sinhalese as a nation had ever reached.

But the Sinhalese race and the Buddhist religion in Ceylon were not destined to perish so miserably. A reaction against this artificial existence did occur. Significantly enough, it came from the ranks of the Sangha. During the troublous times of foreign conquest and exploitation, Buddhist studies were continued in the temples of the Southern Province. In 1839, a Pirivena was established at Ratmalana. The scholars who studied at this institution included Hikkaduwe Sri Sumangala Thero and Pundit Batuvantudave. About the middle of the century a reformation of the Sangha was attempted, and Buddhist activity showed itself in public controversies with Christian missionaries in places like Baddegama, Kelaniya and Gampola.

In 1873 there occurred a great public controversy at Panadura between the Buddhists and the Protestants, and the prominent figure in it was the redoubtable religious fighter, Migettuvatte Gunananda Thero. An account of this controversy, printed in pamphlet form by the *Ceylon Times*, fell into the hands of an enlightened American, Colonel Henry Steele Olcott.

Olcott had been a Colonel in the American army during the Civil War, fighting for the rights of Negroes, and he had won many honours for his valour in battle. Later, in collaboration with a woman of the most remarkable personality, Madame Blavatsky, he had founded, and became first President of, the Theosophical Society, a movement which was to prove of the greatest service in promoting goodwill and understanding among the peoples of the world and in fighting for the rights, especially of the underdog.

Olcott landed in Galle on May 15, 1880. With the instinct of the true warrior he sized up the situation at once; the Buddhists of Ceylon were being crushed in their own land between two grindstones—the British Government and the Christian missionaries. Against this inhumanity a fight was being waged and the doughty soldier entered the fray at once, to lead the campaign for the restoration of their rights to a community which had been denied those rights by a Government which had failed or deliberately refused to understand their aspirations.

The immediate *casus belli*, at the time of Olcott's arrival, was the educational disability under which the Buddhists laboured. The Buddhists were determined to assert their rights. It only needed a man of action to lead them. Within a few years the Buddhist Theosophical Society of Ceylon opened three colleges and 200 schools for some 20,000 children. It was a truly magnificent effort. These institutions had not merely a Buddhist bias, but a strong national bias.

The movement sponsored by Col. Olcott first began with the rise of Buddhist self-respect and later embraced the entire Sinhalese people and spread throughout the whole Island. Not only did Olcott and his followers champion Buddhism, but they also idealized the glorious past of the Sinhalese. They organized Buddhist propaganda and religious instruction, adopted a Buddhist flag and persuaded Governor Sir Arthur Gordon (1883—1890) to make Vesak a public holiday. Buddhist resurgence thus paved the way to Sinhalese nationalism.

With the establishment of Buddhist schools there came about a revival of learning, and through the indefatigable exertions of Buddhist workers such as Anagarika Dharmapala, Walisinha Harischandra, Piyadasa Sirisena and others, national consciousness was created in the country. In the early years of the twentieth century the Sinhalese began to remember that they were the heirs to one of the most glorious cultures in the history of the world. They remembered the greatness of Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa. They looked with a new eye upon the stupas, the temples and all those splendid relics of a splendid age. They saw them no longer as broken stones, with which they had nothing to do, but as living art, a part of their history, a part of themselves. And, remembering, they became fully conscious of the heritage that was theirs.

The greatest impetus to this national awakening was given by the Sinhalese daily newspaper, the "Dinamina", on 2nd March,

1915, by issuing a special edition of the paper to mark the centenary of the end of Sinhalese Independence. It was on 2nd March, 1815, that the Kandyan Chieftains had alienated the birthright of the Sinhalese to the British, and this special edition reminded the people that they had been slaves to a foreign power for a hundred years. In fact, the get-up of the paper was specially designed to bring this fact forcibly home to the minds of the people, arouse national feelings and create a desire to win back their lost freedom.

In this edition there were several special articles to befit the occasion, and, of these, two outstanding contributions were by two Sinhalese who were at that time in the forefront of the patriotic movement; one was "The Rise and Fall of the Sinhalese Kingdom" by D. B. Jayatilaka, the other was "Treaties between the Sinhalese and European Powers" by E. W. Perera. The edition was profusely illustrated with photographs of outstanding men who had played their part in the progress of the Island during these hundred years; and on the front page were portraits of the last King and Queen of Kandy surmounted by the royal insignia, the crown and the Lion Flag, in colour. This was the first occasion, since the fall of the Kandyan Kingdom, on which the Sinhalese became aware of the actual pattern of their national flag; and the reproduction of it in the paper was from a drawing, by a well-known English artist, made at the request of D. R. Wijewardene, from the original Standard now deposited in the Chelsea Hospital.

This "Dinamina" edition created quite a stir in the Island. The newspaper office, which at that time was located in Norris Road, Colombo, was stormed by crowds clamouring for copies of the paper, which by noon was changing hands at five rupees a copy, and telegrams began to pour in from the outstations, requesting more copies, but the edition had been exhausted within a few hours of its issue. Vast crowds gathered on the road opposite the newspaper office, and police had to be called in to control them. After a hurried conference the management decided to re-issue the edition on 6th March, and only when this announcement was made did the crowds disperse. During the interval an enormous number of copies were printed, and on the 6th March the island-wide demand was satisfied.

As a supplement to this special edition, on both days of publication, was issued the original Sinhalese copy of the Kandyan Convention printed with a special border of national design. Although the terms of the Kandyan Convention were known to the English-reading public, it had not up to that date appeared in Sinhalese.

The Sinhalese copy which was in special custody was produced during the Gampola Perahera Case by the Government, and a copy of it was obtained by the "Dinamina". The Buddhists, when they came to know the actual terms of the Convention, were very indignant over the manner in which the British had violated their pledges given to the Sinhalese a hundred years before. In printing the Convention its article 5 was given special prominence by being printed in thick letters. It was the clause which stated that "the religion of the Buddha professed by the Chiefs and other inhabitants of these Provinces is declared inviolable and its rites, ministers, and places of worship are to be maintained and protected."

There was good reason for the emphasis in print put on this particular clause. It referred, in fact, to an incident which had aroused wide-spread resentment in the country. In 1912, when the Basnayaka Nilame of Walahagoda Devala—a famous temple built by Parakrama Bahu at Gampola in the 14th Century—applied for the usual licence to conduct the Esala Perahera, Government Agent Saxton informed him "the licence will be issued to you on condition that music is stopped 50 yards on either side of the Mosque."

The Perahera was a Buddhist and national festival. Sinhalese kings had provided for the celebration of these ceremonies out of the revenues of the realm even in times of distress and foreign menace, and the British were bound by treaty "to protect and maintain" them. The Basnayaka Nilame instituted action in the District Court, Kandy, for the vindication of the immemorial rights of the Temple. The District Judge of Kandy, Dr. Paul E. Pieris, held that the Esala Perahera was a rite which was undertaken to be maintained and protected under the Convention of 1815, that the accustomed route of the Perahera and the continuance of the music was an essential part of the rite; that the Kandyan Convention constituted a binding compact unalterable in all following times. For reasons such as these, he pronounced judgment in favour of the plaintiff. The Buddhists of the country, who had looked on with trepidation, were immensely relieved at this decision.

But their relief turned to dismay when they learnt that, at the instance of the Government Agent, the Attorney General had filed a petition of appeal to the Supreme Court against the judgment of the District Court. The Muslims now grew in defiance. On 27th January, 1915, a religious procession of the Buddhists, which had passed a Muslim village called Telliagomuwa on the Kurunegala-Kandy road, was attacked by the Muslims. On 2nd February,

1915, the Supreme Court, consisting of Justice Shaw and Justice de Sampayo, delivered its judgment, reversing the decree of the District Judge of Kandy.

Justice Shaw was of opinion that the words of the Convention—"the religion of Buddha professed by the Chiefs and other inhabitants of these Provinces is declared inviolable and its rites, ministers and places of worship are to be maintained and protected"—were not intended to confer a right to conduct this particular Perahera in a manner different to other religious processions in the Colony; and he held that, even supposing that the particular right claimed was reserved by the Convention to this particular Perahera, such right was now controlled and varied by the provisions of the Police and Local Boards Ordinances. And Justice de Sampayo was of opinion that, if the provisions of the Police Ordinance of 1865 and the Local Boards Ordinance of 1898 in respect of licences for processions and tom-toms in any way contravened the Kandyan Convention, neither the District Court nor the Supreme Court had jurisdiction to enforce the Convention as against the Ordinance.

The Buddhists were in utter despair when they perused the judgments of the Supreme Court Judges. "How shall we hereafter celebrate our national and religious festivals in our own country without molestation? Who has ever opposed us in our own Kandyan Provinces except the newly arrived Muslims? they cried," wrote Sir P. Ramanathan, in his *Riots and Martial Law in Ceylon*, 1915.

It is interesting to recall that it was only a few months previously, on the declaration of war against the Germans in August, 1914, that King George V had thus spoken to the Empire on the sanctity of treaties and of the pledged word of rulers:

"Had I stood aside when, in defiance of the pledge to which my kingdom was a party, the soil of Belgium was violated and her cities laid desolate, when the very life of the French nation was threatened with extinction, I should have sacrificed my honour and given to destruction the liberties of my Empire and of mankind.

"I rejoice that every part of the Empire is with me in this decision.

"Paramount regard for treaty, faith and pledged word of rulers and peoples is the common heritage of England and India."

Now all those high hopes which the Sinhalese had cherished, of the Britisher's "pledged word," were dashed to the ground. The Kaiser deplored that Britain should declare war on Germany for a "scrap of paper"—the treaty between Britain and Germany guaranteeing the independence of Belgium. Now the Britisher himself made the Kandyan Convention a "scrap of paper." A solemn treaty between two independent nations being overridden by a minor local Ordinance promulgated unilaterally by one of those two parties !

Here then lies a fundamental matter of right and wrong in connection with the Riots of 1915—the denial to the Sinhalese of that "paramount regard for treaty, faith and pledged word of rulers" which King George V had declared was "the common heritage" of India no less than that of England.

On Vesak night, 28th May, 1915, an incident occurred at Castle Street, Kandy, between carol crowds and aggressive Muslims, in the course of which there was some show of violence. Next morning, the Kandy townspeople thought that the disturbance of the previous night would soon be forgotten. But the Kandyan villagers, staunch Buddhists, felt differently. In the intolerance and aggressiveness of the Muslims, they saw a permanent danger to their religious practices and the celebration of their national festivals. But, above all, they feared that the incident of the previous night would be followed by an attack on the Dalada Maligawa—The Temple of the Tooth.

On the 29th morning villagers streamed into the town from the neighbouring hamlets to worship at the Temple. They hung round in the streets, having heard from the Muslims themselves that the Dalada Maligawa would be attacked on arrival of a band of fighters from Colombo. When some leading citizens in town questioned them, they said, "We hear the Maligawa is in danger. What is the good of our living if it is going to be wrecked ?"—so reports Sir P. Ramanathan in his *Riots and Martial Law in Ceylon*, 1915. A large body of rowdy Muslims actually came by train from Colombo that day, but were sent back by the Police. Finally, after a fracas between the Muslims and the Sinhalese had occurred, the crowds were dispersed by the Inspector-General of Police, Dowbiggin, with the help of Punjabis. Thus the riots in Kandy ended.

Wild rumours, however, of the destruction of the Dalada Maligawa, of threat by Muslims to property, honour, lives, of rape and

mutilation of Sinhalese women, spread through the country at lightning speed. Wherever Muslims were, the desire for vengeance, thirst for excitement, greed for loot and the certainty that the rural police would not arrest offenders, helped the progress of the riots. Kind-hearted and righteous Muslims, on the other hand, found ready defenders among the Sinhalese. In Colombo rumour ran that Moors in gangs of thousands had attacked the Sinhalese in the city, and, after destroying the Buddhist temples and the Christian churches, were sallying forth in strong bodies into the surrounding villages to wreak their vengeance on the peasants; the Dalada Maligawa was reported to be in ruins, the Catholic Cathedral of St. Lucia defiled and partly blown up with dynamite. Street-rowdies, looters, habitual criminals and their henchmen made good use of the prevailing panic to loot and plunder. The Police were passive. At this time, in fact, the Police were in a deplorable state, the members of the Force being drawn from the lower strata of society and ill-paid.

News of the riots reached Governor Chalmers at Nuwara Eliya. On 2nd June he hastened down to Kandy. He seemed panic-stricken and, egged on by the Colonial Secretary, Stubbs, and the Inspector General of Police, Dowbiggin, took a most serious view of the case. Despite his official denial, it seems certain that he considered the out-break to be an attempt to subvert the Government. The sensational story that German spies were living in Ceylon in the guise of Buddhist monks, and were planning to overthrow British rule, could not have been without effect. In fact, some time later, the point was raised in the British Parliament, and Steel-Maitland replied that "it was quite possible that German intrigue was at the bottom of the rising in Ceylon." Governor Chalmers, at any rate, lost his head. "Probably," says Sir P. Ramanathan, in his *Riots and Martial Law in Ceylon*, 1915, "he thought that the rioters were armed with guns, bayonets, bombs, and had ample resources." On the same day he proclaimed Martial Law, and in all seriousness he asked the General whether he needed reinforcements from India. Brigadier-General Malcolm replied that local troops would suffice, but he commented that "such a complete handing over of absolute power to the Military is most unusual."

The Military proceeded to put down the Sinhalese with a heavy hand. Men and women were arrested on all sides. "All who had shown any public interest or participated in any of the public

movements of the time, whether political, social, national or temperance, trembled for their safety and their lives," says Armand de Souza, editor of the English daily, *The Ceylon Morning Leader*, in his book on the Riots. Innocence or loyalty was no protection, truth did not help. Anybody whom the authorities suspected or the Muslims denounced, was in danger of his life. Anybody disobeying any order of any civil or military authority was instantly shot. Anybody possessing a firearm or a dangerous weapon was similarly liable to be shot, and "dangerous weapons" included even coconut-scrapers.

The Courts Martial, vengeful and incompetent, took their toll of human life. At Weke, 9 persons charged with "treason" and rioting were convicted and sentenced to death. On July 1st at Colombo, 13 persons charged with treason, were sentenced to death. On July 18th at Hanwella 13 persons including 2 Moors, charged with treason and shop-breaking, were convicted; the Sinhalese were condemned to death, and the Muslims to penal servitude. Some 63 persons, mostly innocent, are computed to have been sentenced to death by Courts Martial. But the complete tale of legalized murder, rape and robbery by Punjabi soldiers will never be told. For three months Martial Law was maintained, "to override, not to strengthen the law—to suspend the guarantee of life, liberty and property and to instil terror into the Sinhalese."

Twice before during the British Period, in 1818 and 1848, the Sinhalese had been subjected to the experience of similar brutal, repressive measures. Coming as it did now after 67 years of peace, its effects were overwhelming. For Martial Law was but an euphemism for handing over the liberties and the lives of the people to swash-buckling, sadistic Britishers in military uniform. The story of the hundred days' Reign of Terror inflicted on the Sinhalese people constitutes a pitiful chapter in the history of Lanka, and a most shameful episode in the history of British Imperialism.

As things returned to normal, and the Government permitted it, a great public meeting was held on 25th September, 1915, at the Public Hall to protest against the iniquities which had been committed. At this time those who were responsible for governmental misdeeds attempted to drive a wedge between the Sinhalese Buddhists and Sinhalese Christians, by trying to make out that the latter had no connection with the Riots. This attempt failed. Then a definite move was made to prevent Sir James Peiris and other Sinhalese Christians from participating in the public meeting—

but Sir James, a man of high principle and sterling integrity, frowned on it. It was at this meeting that Dr. Solomon Fernando died immediately after he had made a speech.

On 25th November, 1915, the Memorial prepared by the Committee appointed at the meeting was submitted to the Secretary of State, Bonar Law. It says:

“Men were shot in cold blood without any form of trial or enquiry, although even during the riots the sitting of a single Court of Justice was not interfered with or interrupted. . . . Except in one instance or two, these men were deliberately put to death in the presence of their mothers, wives, children and friends. In some cases the victims were roused from their beds, taken out and shot, notwithstanding their protests and insistent prayers for inquiry. In other cases persons who were arrested, were shot without being allowed the opportunity of proving their innocence.

“After the disturbances had ceased, hundreds of men have been severely flogged, chiefly in the Kelani Valley and Ratnapura districts. This cruel and degrading form of punishment has been inflicted not on the orders of a competent Court of Justice after a judicial inquiry, but by Military and Volunteer Officers, as a rule without investigation and without giving the victims the opportunity of making any defence. . . .

“The Police and Military were employed to secure, by force and intimidation, evidence against individuals. Men were arrested and threatened, handcuffed and detained in custody without any charge being preferred against them, solely for the purpose of inducing them to give evidence against particular persons. Women of respectability had been subjected to the indignity of arrest and confinement as hostages until male members of their families, against whom there were charges in connection with the riots, surrendered themselves. Cases are also on record where accused persons were compelled by threats to make a confession of guilt.

“The houses of some of the most prominent Sinhalese gentlemen in Colombo and elsewhere were searched by the Military and the Police. . . . Although nothing was found to justify such a course, most of the gentlemen were arrested a fortnight later and detained in gaol for weeks together. . . . When it was found that none of them could be proved to have the remotest connection either with the riots or with the

alleged conspiracy...they were compelled to enter into bonds depositing cash securities, which in some instances amounted to ten thousand rupees. It will be noted that the majority who were treated in this unjust, illegal and humiliating manner were leading Buddhists, including professional men, highly respected by the whole community for their character and their labours in connection with such social movements as educational and temperance work in the Island.

“Punjabi soldiers, mostly Mohammedans, unacquainted with the language and customs of the people, were employed to search the houses of the peasantry. The manner of these searches was harsh in the extreme, and instances are not wanting of misconduct on the part of these soldiers.....”

Of the way the Governor, Sir Robert Chalmers, who was a reputed Pali scholar, and who had been very cordially received by the people when he arrived in the Island, had degraded his office and powers, Eardley Norton, the famous advocate of the Indian Bar, who was retained to defend some of the wealthier Sinhalese, wrote thus to the Secretary of State:

“To the tragedy of a complete surrender of jurisdiction uncontrolled by any form of appeal, and the consequent degradation of a Governor’s high office, must be added the comedy of His Excellency praising, before the Legislative Council, the cool sagacity and prompt action of the General. It would take more than one Governor to undo the good due to British Administration of many patient years, but one Governor has it in his power—and the present one has exercised it—to bring British Administration into horror and contempt.....”

Contrasting the events in Ceylon with his experience in India, Norton said:

“As I heard the witnesses’ statements and reviewed the circumstances under which the laws had been superseded, and I was being called upon to plead for men who might without judicial control be shot or hanged, I realised the profound responsibility of my situation, as I had never realised it before, and I reverently thanked the Almighty that I had lived in India.

“I have laboured for thirty-six years through periods of grave political anxiety and suspense. I have appeared in

numberless cases where many men's lives have been lost. I have seen the civil magistracy, under pardonable stress, call out the armed forces in Bengal, Madras and Bombay to send out crowds with short shrift to their last account.

"I have had to perform the melancholy duty of prosecuting misguided Indian youths for attempts to subvert British administration throughout the country. I have known senior officers of the Civil Services shot dead. I have noted that a Viceroy was assassinated almost to the point of death with a bomb. Yet Indian authority, to its eternal credit, has never abused itself by suppressing the established Civil Court in favour of military intervention. In the most serious event, the liberty of the subject has been scrupulously respected and his rights reserved, and no tribunal has ever been permitted to deal with that liberty which was not either composed entirely of trained lawyers or on which trained lawyers were not represented.

"In Ceylon, official panic replaced official respect for the law, and the Governor, with his eyes open, for no cause declared, deliberately deprived the King's subjects of that protection which it is England's boast shall surround the trial of the most humble offender. Can we wonder that there is widespread, throughout the Island, among the Sinhalese, a feeling of deep-rooted, if silent, disappointment ?

"I write as no paid advocate. My legal conscience has been shocked and my moral sense lacerated by an invasion of principles which I believe most Englishmen will regard as necessary for the preservation of municipal peace and their own national honour."

The Royal Commission of Inquiry demanded in the Memorial and supported by forty members of Parliament, including three Bishops and others of the standing of the Master of Balliol, was not granted. But Governor Chalmers was recalled and Sir John Anderson, Permanent Under-Secretary in the Colonial Office, was sent as Governor with special instructions to redress the wrongs done to the Sinhalese. On his arrival he immediately set to his task. He liberated most of those who were languishing in prison, sentenced by Drum-head Court Martial Courts, on the false evidence of Muslims sworn on the Koran; as well as by that of Sinhalese who were at enmity with them. But it was too late, the mischief had been done, and a very large number had died in jail.

Governor Anderson was unable to punish the official offenders, as they were protected by an Act of Indemnity obtained from the Imperial Government.

A Commission that was appointed by Governor Anderson to inquire into some of the shootings in the Kegalla District issued their report. Based on the findings of this Commission, the Governor wrote a despatch to the then Secretary of State, Walter Long, in which he pointed out that the responsibility for those shameful incidents lay on certain Englishmen who were members of the Colombo Town Guard, an organization brought into being during World War I to defend the City of Colombo. F. N. Sudlow, who had received instructions from the Inspector-General of Police to deal vigorously with the disturbances, the Governor said, "seemed to have construed them into a commission to administer *lynch law* throughout the area prescribed for his patrol, and to have considered that their effect was to make him the leader of a *posse of vigilantes* sent out to deal with desperadoes in the manner depicted in cinema shows and dime novels of the 'Wild West.' It may seem incomprehensible that an Englishman in an English Colony could have entertained such an idea."

In cancelling the appointment as Justice of the Peace and Unofficial Police Magistrate of another Englishman, a planter called A. D. Sly, the Governor said: "I can scarcely consider it desirable that such a man should remain in charge of a large labour force in the Island. But the power entrusted to me under the Order in Council to deport is scarcely applicable to such a case, and I fear that, much as his conduct deserves the loathing and disgust of every decent Englishman, I can do nothing to give tangible expression to that feeling."

Concluding his despatch, Governor Anderson said: "It is fortunate for all those implicated in these proceedings that their action was entirely unknown to any responsible member of the Government and to my predecessor. If they had been brought either to his notice or to the notice of the Colonial Office, the Indemnity Order in Council would have been differently drawn, and they would probably have had to face a tribunal on a serious charge."

No event of the past century had a more potent influence in shaping the mind of a people than the brutality with which the Riots were suppressed. The effect was similar to that of the partition of Bengal by Lord Curzon and the Jallianwallabagh incident. The responsibility for the atrocities committed on the

Sinhalese in 1915 was entirely with the bureaucratic government, relying for its information and advice on the unsympathetic and uninformed elements outside the community, who were alarmed at the revival of Sinhalese nationalism, and of the disgruntled reactionaries within the community to whom the resurgence of Buddhistic influence was anathema, and who therefore deliberately sought to put the clock back a hundred years. But fate decided otherwise.

The humiliations, undeserved sufferings and much worse that were undergone by the people in 1915 drove the iron into their soul. The Riots marked the point when the people of Ceylon decided that, without political freedom, any relation between the ruler and the ruled was one of master and slave.

Those who had figured prominently in the temperance movement now foresaw that, without control of the Government of the country, there was no liberty. And many whose horizon, up to that time, had never extended beyond the Presidentship of the All-Ceylon Temperance Union, came over to politics; the result of which was that, within thirty years, under the Donoughmore and Soulbury Constitutions, some of these temperance workers found themselves in Ministerial posts. Thus truly did Aristotle say: "Political disturbances may arise out of small matters, but are not therefore about small matters."

(4) *Mahatma Gandhi's Question*

WHEN Mahatma Gandhi visited Kandy in the early nineteen-thirties, he took up temporary residence at the *Walauwa* of a Kandyan Chief who availed himself of the opportunity to take him through the halls of his stately mansion—the outward symbol of the pomp and glory of a "Chief of men." The Chief took him through a maze of corridors where the Mahatma saw one gadget after another, electric bells and electric fans, swinging doors and sliding doors, hot-water baths and cold-water baths. The Chief took him upstairs over a staircase of satinwood inlaid with ebony. He was taken through crowded bedrooms and was shown spring mattresses and downy pillows, plush curtains and satin bed-covers and mosquito nets in all the hues of the rainbow. The Chief was giving the Mahatma "the time of his life." Finally, at the end of what may have seemed to the Chief a perfect day, he asked his distinguished guest what he thought of it all.

The Mahatma was silent for a moment. Then he asked the Chief, very simply:

“Are you happy in it?”

All the world has been and is talking all the time about Ceylon being “The Resplendent Isle,” “The Pearl upon the Brow of India,” “The Garden of Eden,” “The Spicy Isle,” “The Land of Sunshine,” “The Emerald Isle,” “Divine Lanka,” “The Ophir of King Solomon,” “The Island of Jewels,” “The Land of the Hyacinth and the Ruby,” “The Golden Island,” “The Land of Delights,” “The Pearl of the Orient,” “The Land without Sorrow,” “The Wonderland of the East,” “The Island of Palms and Pearls,” “The Abode of the God of Luck,” “The Land of Eternal Charm,” “By the Gods Beloved and Nature Blessed,” and other bright and attractive appellations.

But how many, who are often driven to such ecstacy by these dreamy descriptive rhapsodies of our country, have chosen to ask themselves the infinitely more important and vital question:

Are its people happy?

When we speak of “its people,” we do not have in mind its 50,000 odd income-tax payers or its so-called privileged classes. These are generally supposed to be happy either because of their wealth or because of their privileged position—but what we are thinking of is the mighty remainder, still running into well over six millions, representing the sons and daughters of this celebrated Isle, and the question that keeps, as it were, beating itself into us all the time is:

Are these people happy?

(5) *The Britisher Answers*

ONE of the gravest features which the Malaria Epidemic of 1935 brought forcibly to public attention was the calamitous poverty of the peasantry. Everybody with a personal knowledge of rural conditions has been perfectly well aware of the villager’s unhappy lot, but it had become fashionable to depict him as an indolent creature, whom Nature’s bounty had spoiled and who was in the happy position of finding himself well provided with all life’s necessities in return for a minimum of labour.

But the malaria outbreak and its tragic consequences exploded the fallacy of an indolent peasantry living in the lap of plenty. Not only had their weak physique been so lacking in stamina as to make

them ready victims of the disease in its most virulent forms, but inability to work even for a few days had left the family larder denuded; and men, women and children were confronted with the ghastly spectre of starvation.

It is a grim paradox that a land reputed to be one of the most fertile in the world, the produce of whose soil has enriched thousands of investors from abroad, should be inhabited by a population living and dying on the very borderline of sheer hunger and want.

To support this statement it is not necessary to do more than quote the very findings of Mr. H. E. Newnham, of the Ceylon Civil Service, who was appointed Special Commissioner of Relief of Distress occasioned by the malaria epidemic, and who, after his retirement from the Service, was nominated by the Governor to the State Council to represent British Commercial interests in Ceylon. He wrote:

“The peasant seems to be the victim of a descending spiral traced by inappropriate food, weakened constitution, hook-worm and malaria, lethargy, pessimism, inferior agriculture, inappropriate food and so round and round again.”

As regards the normal condition of the people on rural areas, Mr. Newnham mentioned the constituents of the low standard of diet of the labouring classes and drew attention to the lack of any reserve. He said:

“They are brought very near to starvation point by any small disturbance of their normal equilibrium, such as the death of a man, sickness or un-employment, bad weather conditions, even a small fine in the Court, an invasion of their small patch of cultivation by deer, wild boar, an elephant or a neighbour's cattle. Then the morning meal may be reduced to a small quantity of weak plain tea with a suspicion of sugar in the palm of the hand touched by the tongue to get an impression of sweetness, and later to nothing. The mid-day meal becomes a small quantity of boiled bread-fruit, jak, papaw or some jungle fruit. The normal existence of some of the villagers, particularly in the dry zone, is indeed ‘mean’. They live, as the saying goes, ‘from hand to mouth,’ but the hand is sometimes empty and rarely well filled.”

The fact that numbers of persons have for long existed in conditions of privation and starvation which the epidemic publicly disclosed is emphasised in another statement issued by Mr. Newnham. He declared:

“The present emergency has publicly disclosed the degree of privation, and often of starvation, in which unfortunately numbers of people, particularly in the rural areas, have for long existed. It is probable that at present many such are better off, at the public expense, than they have often been in the past, but it is unlikely that public opinion will tolerate their abandonment to their former condition.”

Here is another picture of this so-called “Land without Sorrow,” as drawn by another British Civil Servant, Mr. F. C. Gimson, Assistant Government Agent, Kegalla, at the time of the epidemic, and Colonial Secretary of Hongkong when the Japanese marched into it:

“The condition of those suffering from fever was deplorable. In one village in the first house I visited I found a woman had just given birth to a child and no one was in a fit condition to attend to its wants, as the rest of the family were stricken with fever. The mother and the child were both in a dying condition and it was doubtful whether they would be able to live long.

“In the next house I found a child had just died and all the family, riddled with fever, mourning her loss. They themselves were not in a position to undertake its burial.

“In the next house every one was down with the fever with the exception of a small child, eighteen months old. She was sprawling about, howling for food which her mother in a state of delirium was unable to give.

“In one house a child was found to be the only one living person out of a total of six inmates; the five corpses were lying about awaiting burial, and the child was trying in vain to obtain nourishment from the breast of her dead mother.”

A child trying in vain to obtain nourishment from the breast of her dead mother is a theme which no artist, in the 5000 years of recorded human history, has ever visualised or attempted to paint, and we can only hope that mankind in the future will be spared the horror of the vision of such a picture.

This outbreak was the legacy of negligence and short-sightedness on the part of those who had been governing us for over one hundred years. The verdict of the Special Commissioner, that the distress revealed by the epidemic had been the normal level of life in thousands of villages, constitutes the most terrible indictment yet published of over a century of British rule in Ceylon.

If the old form of British Colonial Government that has but lately been superseded had even one-hundredth of the sense of beneficence that used to be claimed for it, anybody would have expected to find a very different state of affairs prevailing among the rural population. It used to be the fashion to declare from high places that the British Government Agents were truer friends and representatives of the people than members drawn from classes which were supposed to have cut themselves aloof from the large mass of the people to such an extent as to have lost all real sympathy with their hardships and disabilities.

The implication was that the peasantry was much better off under the patriarchal care of the British officials than if Sinhalese politicians got any control of affairs into their own hands. And it is a tragic irony that it should have fallen to the lot of the one official who in his day embodied many of the less attractive characteristics of the old bureaucracy to expose, though unwittingly, the falsity of that smug and complacent claim. For Mr. Newnham's report showed that, after the patriarchs had exercised their sway for more than a hundred years, the condition of the villager was one of abject misery.

(6) *Karma or Social Order ?*

THE plight of the people during the malaria epidemic in Ceylon recalls at once to the memory the historic outburst of eloquence with which that great English tribune, John Bright, thrilled the House of Commons and the British people for a like cause. How almost literally and tragically true to our own circumstances was the simple and moving utterance with which Bright roused the conscience of the nation to a realisation of the tragedy that was being enacted before their eyes. There was no similar outstanding figure in our own public life whose moral prestige could have sounded a clarion call for service, as, for instance, Rajendra Prasad did in India after the Bihar earthquake. Even the mere flame of patriotism can be kindled only by a selfless patriot.

Our Island was faced with a similar crisis twenty years before the epidemic. But the reaction on that occasion was different, and afforded a striking study in comparison. The crisis affected all ranks. Several public and professional men were incarcerated and their lives as well as those of the people were in jeopardy. The interests of the leaders were imperilled, their *amour propre* wounded. The agitation against the Government was carried on with all the resources which they could command. The movement for the reform of the constitution was set on foot and carried on with great energy and driving force. The culmination of that agitation was the Donoughmore Constitution.

How did the leaders react to the 1935 crisis? Did the calamity that overtook the people touch their conscience to a proper realization of their duty? How was their moral conscience touched by this unparalleled misfortune which befell their countrymen? The Leader of the State Council, Sir Baron Jayatilaka, merely said: "The people are suffering for their Karma and they themselves must work out that Karma: A Government cannot alter one's Karma." Another view was that "the distress was moral rather than economic." Yet another view was that "in defective personality was to be found the root of much of their suffering and want."

But the nation's travail revealed sources of self-sacrificing zeal and energy hitherto unsuspected. Swami Vivekananda says that suffering exists in this world in order to evoke the spirit of service in man. The springs of human sympathy welled up from those outside the ranks of the leaders and they displayed a wonderful fellow-feeling with the suffering people. The cry for relief evoked a ready response from the younger members of the Sangha and school teachers, university students, bus drivers, conductors, and the like, and they hurried provisions and comforts to the areas devastated by disease and hunger. It was the activities of the newly elected State Councillors that had revealed the appalling character of the epidemic to the public, but for whom this disaster would have gone unnoticed as similar ones had been countless times before.

The portion of Ceylon which suffered the visitation of this epidemic covered nearly 6,000 square miles; that is, less than a quarter of the whole area of the Island. But it was densely populated by more than 3 million souls, or more than half the total population of the country. Of these three million, 50 per cent, contracted

the disease, and there were nearly 100,000 fatalities. Nor do these figures convey the whole effects of the disaster, many of which were incalculable ; such as, for instance, the loss of harvests for want of labour, later recurrences of the disease in non-fatal cases, debility induced by the malaria (especially in small children). The suddenness of its onset, the intensity of its ravages, and its spread over the fairest agricultural districts, combined to render it the greatest catastrophe which overtook the country in modern times.

To end this state of affairs, what is it that has been seriously undertaken by our leaders who sometimes sympathise so volubly and sentimentally over the condition of the poor ? To deplore an evil without taking steps to end it is to play with human life, treating the needy as a figure of rhetoric and not using the opportunity to do a real and lasting service.

A debate that took place in the State Council on 30th August, 1938, nearly three years after the epidemic, is interesting. This is what Sir Baron Jayatilaka, the fatalist, the then Leader of the State Council, said:—"Several members have asked what has happened to the rural reconstruction scheme and many members blamed the Board of Ministers for not producing such a scheme The Board of Ministers will never be able to produce a type plan for village reconstruction which will apply everywhere. What is needed is that something should be done in the country. There are private individuals and societies already doing this sort of work. Every member ought to make an effort in this direction. There appears to be a lot of misunderstanding in regard to rural reconstruction. If there is no voluntary effort the whole scheme will fail. The object is to help themselves.

"Unfortunately, there are people who say that the root of all these evils, all diseases, all crime, is Capitalism and, therefore, Capitalism must be destroyed ! This reminds me of the 'Coriander Vedarala', who, whatever the complaint of the patient, prescribed coriander. It seems to me that our political and economic Vedaralas adopt the same method of treatment. This sort of propaganda is not going to help us. It will only result in producing in this country that class warfare which is becoming the nightmare of Western civilization."

Our leaders who make the panic cry of "the nightmare of Western civilization" and rant about "isms" descending upon this country should bear these facts in mind. For a hundred years and more, a form of government has operated which has had the effect

of intensifying the deterioration of the population along lines which have led to red revolution in countries, inhabited by less docile people than ours.

The result of all that long period of government is, in Mr. Newnham's own words, "inappropriate food, disease, lethargy, ignorance and pessimism." He might as well be describing the condition of the millions of serfs in Russia before they, in sheer desperation, sought refuge in Bolshevism.

Most of the adherents of Marxism in Ceylon are desperate people who are prepared to try any experiment, because they think nothing could be worse than the existing order. Soviet methods of class-warfare, where landlords have been murdered or ejected from their estates by the peasants, and their lands have been divided up amongst themselves, are dangled before the masses by the Marxists.

Very few of these poverty-stricken millions have a reasoned grasp of the theories of Marxism. All that they know or feel is that Marxism in practice means the upsetting of the present order. If it contains elements which a man cherishes, he does not naturally wish to see it shattered. But the unfolding of economic life as it is lived today presents few attractive features for the mass of humanity in this country. They are dissatisfied, and to them in their discontent Communism offers a new earth.

It was abject poverty and starvation that led to the armed rising and the establishment of Marxism in Russia. The same kind of fertile ground for the impregnation of Marxist ideas exists in Ceylon. Nowhere in the world can the proletariat be persuaded to open revolt unless their living conditions become intolerable, and nothing could germinate a spirit of desperation so much as years of grinding poverty and the realization that one is not provided with a decent chance in life.

Those, who are in close and intimate touch with the vast army of the humble people of this land, are inevitably driven to the conclusion that their sufferings are not due to their Karma, as Sir Baron Jayatilaka pronounced, but very largely due to the prevailing social conditions of the country. These people are roaming about like vagabonds, not because they love to do so, but because they have no place, called their own, to rest their heads on in this land, their birth-right, consecrated for their welfare by the Master Himself on the occasion of His first visit to Lanka.

These people are in mud hovels and slums, not because they prefer a brutish life, but because they cannot afford to live elsewhere. There the poor man lives with the fear of hunger in his eyes, with the shadow of want upon his door-step, and with dread in his mind of what his surroundings will mean to the physical and moral well-being of his family. One finds him living precariously from year's end to year's end, and yet they call this land: "The Abode of the God of Luck!"

(7) *The Kelaniya Declaration*

ON the 16th of February, 1796, Colombo surrendered to the British forces. After the capitulation, Ceylon was placed under the Government of Madras and its administration entrusted to a Major-General commanding the Forces, assisted by three civil officers who were stationed at Colombo, Galle and Jaffnapatam.

The employment, however, of "dubashes" imported from Madras for the purpose of collecting the revenue, and the harsh methods they adopted in the performance of their duties, led to an insurrection in several of the Korales in 1797. The eventual result was the withdrawal of Ceylon from the control of the Madras Government, the transfer of the Island to the Crown, its conversion into a King's Colony and the appointment of the Hon. Frederick North, as its first Governor, on October 12, 1798.

The Governor was authorised to nominate a Council of Advice for the Island. This Council, which was then described as His Majesty's Council and was composed entirely of the higher members of the Civil Service, presided over by the Governor, formed the legislature of the Island.

In 1809, Sir Alexander Johnston, Chief Justice, proposed to the Marquis of Londonderry, then Secretary of State for the Colonies, for the improvement of the Island, *inter alia*:

"That a Constitution of Government, similar in principle to the British Constitution, but so modified as to suit the religious and moral feelings of the natives, and the peculiar circumstances of the country, be guaranteed to all the inhabitants of the Island by an act of Parliament.

"That measures be taken for forming a respectable Constituency in each province amongst the natives of the country according to their numbers and other circumstances, to be

arranged hereafter, as their representatives in a Legislative Assembly which shall be assembled in a central part of the island ; and shall legislate according to rules which shall hereafter be fixed by themselves for the interest of the Island."

The Secretary of State agreed with Sir Alexander as to the policy of all these measures ; and would, had he continued in office, have authorised the local Government to carry the whole of them into effect. The Marquis, having soon after given up office and having been succeeded by Lord Liverpool, his policy was not acted upon to so great an extent as he had originally intended.

In 1831 Lieut-Colonel Colebrooke and C. H. Cameron, who had been commissioned by the British Government to inquire into the administration of the Government of Ceylon, submitted their reports. Colebrooke in his report made certain important recommendations, effecting changes in the method of legislation and in the administration of the revenues of the Colony. He recommended an Executive Council to be composed of the Secretary to Government, the Treasurer of the Island, the Auditor-General, the Surveyor-General, the Collector of Customs at Colombo and the Government Agent. He also envisaged a Legislative Council.

C. H. Cameron, in his report on Judicial Establishments and Procedure in Ceylon, said: "The peculiar circumstances of Ceylon, both physical and moral, seemed to point it out to the British Government as the fittest spot to plant the germ of European civilisation whence we may not unreasonably hope that it will hereafter spread over the whole of the vast territories." Judging from the sequence of events the creation of a Legislative Council was perhaps immediately due to the suggestions thrown out by Colebrooke in his Report.

In 1833 the Legislative Council was created and it included six unofficial members, nominated by the Governor to represent the Sinhalese, Tamil, Burgher, General European, Planting and Mercantile communities. From its inception the unofficial members showed signs of impatience at the restrictions imposed on their powers of legislation and at the lack of all control over the finances of the Colony. With the object of securing the right to dispose of the local revenues untrammelled by the ruling of the Governor or the Secretary of State for the Colonies, a reforms campaign was carried on both in and out of Council by means of protests, petitions and public meetings.

Matters came to a head in 1863 when, acting on the instructions of the Secretary of State, Sir Hercules Robinson, then Governor, in spite of the opposition of the unofficial members, appropriated for military contribution to Britain a sum of Rs. 30,000, which had been specially voted for works and buildings. The struggle was continued in the session of 1864, and culminated in the resignation of the unofficial members from the Council in a body.

This step was followed by the formation of the Ceylon League by George Wall on May 16, 1865, to carry on the fight that had been fought unsuccessfully around the Council-board. The League was composed not only of the ex-members of Council but of the leading citizens of the island as well. A committee was formed, meetings held, and a vigorous campaign conducted both here and in England; George Wall, the ex-Planting Member, having been specially commissioned by the League to interview the British authorities and secure the sympathy of the British public.

The League declared its sole aim to be the securing of full control of the financial affairs of the Colony by a modification of the Constitution and procedure of the Council, and it disclaimed all desire for any violent change or enlargement of the Council, "however desirable on other grounds." In furtherance of the objects of the League a petition was addressed to Queen Victoria signed by over 2,500 of the inhabitants, European and Ceylonese.

This petition was forwarded by the Governor, Sir Hercules Robinson, with a covering despatch dated 23rd April, 1866. In this famous State document the Governor adroitly obscured the main issue by discoursing on the applicability to a Colony like Ceylon of British Constitutional principles, the unfitness of the people for self-government, and the unrepresentative character of the unofficial members who were merely nominees of Government.

The despatch put an end to all hope of securing redress. The petitioners were informed by the Earl of Carnarvon, Colonial Secretary, that he felt himself unable to advise Her Majesty to accede to their prayer, alleging, as a reason for the refusal to transfer to the Council the control over the revenues and legislation of the Colony, the inability to establish in Ceylon any legislature which would really represent the population of the country.

Very minor changes were effected in the Constitution when two additional unofficial members were appointed to represent the Kandyan Sinhalese and Mohammedan communities, and in 1889

the term of office of all unofficial members, who originally held their seats for life, was limited to three years. This period was extended to five years, with the right to renomination for another term of five years.

In 1903, an attempt was made, during the administration of Sir West Ridgeway, to have the Executive Council enlarged by the addition of two unofficial members to represent popular interests. With this object a motion was brought forward by J. N. Campbell, the General European member, and carried through Council. The proposal was recommended by the Governor "as tending to satisfy the public opinion which is in favour of more effective representation in the Government of the Colony", but was vetoed by Joseph Chamberlain, then Secretary of State, on the ground that such a step could be justified only if the members of the Legislative Council were the nominees not of the Governor but of the people.

The demand for an effective participation in the Government of the Colony and the introduction of the elective principle in filling the seats of the Legislative Assembly became more insistent.

Chief among the causes that contributed to a desire for a reform in the existing Councils were the spread of education, the increasing wealth of the people with the consequent formation of a leisured class interested in public affairs, the growth of public opinion, the democratisation of the Indian institutions, and, remotely, the general awakening of the people of the East. The new campaign for popular rights opened with a question asked in the House of Commons on the subject of Reforms, and a Memorandum submitted by James Peiris on the 12th of December, 1908, at the request of the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies who also had granted Mr. Peiris an interview. This was followed by a memorial to the Secretary of State from the leading inhabitants of the Island, which was forwarded by H. J. C. Pereira, and others from the Jaffna, Chilaw, National and Low-Country Products Associations.

On 26th October, 1909, Colonel Seely, acting on behalf of the then Secretary of State, the Marquis of Crewe, met a deputation of five Ceylonese and one Englishman. They were H. J. C. Pereira, F. H. M. Corbet, K. Gomez, J. W. de Silva, David Rockwood and E. W. Perera. That was the first reforms deputation of note and had been arranged by the efforts of E. W. Perera, that tried campaigner of early reform movements, and D. R. Wijewardene, who was at that time a student in England. H. J. C. Pereira acted as the leader of that deputation, and what he urged was that Ceylon be

granted the elective principle in the selection of Councillors and provincial representation in place of the racial basis.

The sequel to that deputation was the grant of the "Educated Ceylonese" seat in the Legislative Council: One member for the whole Island elected by an electorate whose franchise was limited by educational or property qualifications. This was the first time that the elective principle was introduced into the Ceylon legislature. A Draft Ordinance was framed on instructions from the Secretary of State, and with a few amendments, the Franchise Ordinance was passed by the Legislative Council on 24th September, 1910; and the new Council was proclaimed on the 16th of January, 1912.

The reforms of 1912 had not in any appreciable measure satisfied the political aspirations of the Sinhalese and Tamil middle classes who formed the backbone of the reform movement. The agitation for reform therefore continued unabated, and with the passage of time it came to acquire a vigour which, by the end of World War I, made the further ignoring of its demands by the British Government impossible.

The immediate impetus of the clamour for reform came from the hostility to the British, consequent on the severity of the repressive measures adopted under the Martial Law which was imposed after the 1915 riots. The Sinhalese in particular realised that the only way the repetition of such misrule could be prevented was by the people obtaining some sort of effective control over the administration.

The Ceylon Reform League was established in May, 1917, under the leadership of Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam. The Ceylon National Association was also formed. And in December, 1919, a more permanent organisation, the Ceylon National Congress, came into being.

The National Congress lost no time in formulating its chief reform demands, which were succinctly stated in its telegram to the Secretary of State, which read as follows:—"Enlarge Legislative Council about fifty members, four fifths elected territorially, wide male franchise, restricted female franchise, remaining one fifth officials and unofficals representing important minorities; secondly elected speaker, Legislative Council; thirdly continuance full control budget, no dyarchy; fourthly, Executive Council at least half Ceylonese, chosen from elected members Legislative Council; fifthly, Governor should possess English parliamentary experience;

sixthly, complete popular control local self-government." In June, 1920, the Secretary of State received deputations on the matter of reforms from the Kandyan Association, the Ceylon National Congress and the European Association of Ceylon.

In August, 1920, the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Governor, Sir William Manning (1918—1925), issued an Order-in-Council in response to these demands. The new scheme of reforms had a show of representative government but in reality gave no power to the Ceylonese, since, in spite of the proposed Council containing a majority of unofficials, in practice the Government yet commanded a safe majority. Besides, the Governor was to be given further extraordinary powers, such as the right to stop the discussion of any bill, to limit the time of any discussion and to suspend unofficial members. The National Congress condemned the reforms and refused to participate, since they "introduced invidious distinctions between communities, created special interests and denied even the beginnings of responsible government." D. B. Jayatilaka interpreted the feelings of the country by denouncing these reforms as utterly inadequate and "reactionary" and an "affront to the people of Ceylon." But when Governor Manning promised that, if Congress co-operated, a further instalment of reforms based on recommendations made by the new Council, would be granted, Congress accepted the offer.

It was about this time that the Tamils broke away from the Congress. The immediate reason for the split was that Congress would not agree to support the demand of the Tamils for a reserved seat in the Western Province. The actual causes arose from the struggle between the two communities over their respective shares in the political power that was soon expected to pass into the hands of the Ceylonese, and also from the contest for openings in Government Service. Accordingly the Tamils submitted their own demands separately in a memorial to the Secretary of State. In view of the importance of the Tamil community, they asked for two-thirds as many seats as would be assigned to the Sinhalese. Low-country Sinhalese, of whom Congress now mainly consisted, knew how eagerly the British authorities would avail themselves of such a situation, and tried to win back the Tamils by offering them a larger share of representation than was warranted by their numbers. But it was too late, for the Tamils apparently had been completely won over by Governor Manning. The demands for territorial representation, which the Congress had in view, had

little chance now of being supported by the Tamils in Council, since indeed they would be losers by it. Nevertheless the reform movement was destined to outlast communal jealousies.

In December, 1921, Sir James Peiris, who had always been a steady supporter of Government, proposed, in the new Legislative Council, reforms similar to those suggested by Congress. He demanded a Council of 45 members, 28 to be territorially elected (9 of whom were allotted to the Tamil Provinces) 11 for the minorities, and 6 to be officials. He also asked for an elected Speaker, and a lowering of the franchise qualification. Two months later, the Tamils and the minority communities submitted a memorandum asking for a Council of 45 members—19 territorially elected, 11 communally elected, 3 nominated and 12 officials. Governor Manning, however, would not agree to these allocations, but suggested a Council of 47 members, the seats being distributed in such a manner as to make it impossible for any community to dominate the others, or for the Sinhalese and Tamils combined to outvote the minorities and the officials. He would not accede to the demands to widen the franchise or to elect a Speaker. In the end the Secretary of State agreed to have a Council of 49, of whom 24 were to represent the Tamils and the Sinhalese. The total number of elected Ceylonese members was to be 31, and 23 of them were to be territorially elected. Two elected members of the Legislative Council were to be appointed to the Executive Council conditional to their resigning their membership of the former. But in practice it was impossible that the new constitution of 1924 should function successfully, since the powers of financial control were placed in the hands of the Ceylonese elected majority, and the Executive necessarily had to carry out its measures through a Legislative Council so composed.

In 1925 Sir Hugh Clifford (1925—27) succeeded Governor Manning. Years before, when Sir Hugh was serving in Ceylon in a less exalted capacity, he had characterized the political agitators as “the little core of rot.” Staunch Imperialist though he was, he had the wisdom to see at once that the new constitution could not possibly function, and reported accordingly to the Secretary of State. The result was the appointment of the Donoughmore Commission which was asked “to report on the working of the existing constitution and on any difficulties of administration which may have arisen in connection with it; to consider any proposals for the revision of the constitution that may be put

forward; and to report what, if any, amendments of the Order-in-Council now in force should be made." The Commission consisted of the Earl of Donoughmore as chairman and three members of Parliament, Sir Matthew Nathan, Sir Geoffrey Butler and Dr. Drummond Shiels. The Commission carried on its investigations from November, 1927, to February, 1928, and presented its report to Parliament in July.

The Commissioners found that, whereas in the earlier system the Executive had functioned without in any way being hampered by the wishes of the legislature, the reforms had, by transferring power to the Legislative Council, created an untenable situation. The Executive Council, consisting of five officials and four unofficials, had no direct link with the Legislative Council. The Legislature, in fact, with its elected Ceylonese majority, treated the Executive with some antagonism and often without much cause severely criticized the actions of the Executive. On the other hand, since the Legislative Council controlled the budget, its Finance Committee wielded more power than the Executive Council. The Manning constitution was accordingly declared unworkable. In place of it the Commissioners decided to recommend a government in which Ceylonese were to have a fair share of responsibility. Resulting from this decision, certain problems had to be investigated, *viz.* franchise, the method of representation, and the position of Government Servants. "Communal representation," they declared, "is a canker on the body politic . . . there can be no hope of binding together the diverse elements of the population in a realization of their common kinship and an acknowledgment of common obligations to the country of which they are all citizens, as long as the system of communal representation, with all its disintegrating influences, remains a distinctive feature of the constitution."

They recommended the abolition of communal representation, but, to protect the minorities, 12 nominated seats, 6 of which were to be for Europeans, were to be established, and the Governor was to be given additional powers. Hitherto the franchise had been limited to about 4 per cent. of the population, the electorate in 1924 having been 204,997. The Commissioners recommended that men over 21 and women over 30 be allowed to vote, provided that the voter had abiding interests in the country or could "be regarded as permanently settled in the Island." Thirdly, to ensure the security of Government servants, the salaries, pensions, etc.

of all Government Servants were to be decided by the Secretary of State, and the appointments, promotions etc., by the Governor assisted by a Public Services Commission. Finally, in the absence of a party system, the Commissioners found a Parliamentary form of government unsuitable for Ceylon. Therefore they proposed a State Council, modelled on the London County Council, of 65 territorially elected members and 12 nominated ones, who were to have legislative powers and exercise executive powers. Government was to be divided into ten departments. Three Officers of State who had not the right to vote in Council—the Chief Secretary, the Financial Secretary and the Legal Secretary—were to hold charge of large departments including defence, the police system and certain fiscal arrangements. The seven other groups—Home Affairs, Agriculture and Lands, Health, Labour, Industry and Commerce, and Communications and Works—were to be controlled by the elected members divided into seven Executive Committees. The elected Chairmen of the Committees with the three Officers of State were to form the Board of Ministers.

The Legislative Council at first strongly opposed the proposals of the Donoughmore Commission. In June, 1929, the Governor, Sir Herbert Stanley (1927—31) submitted to Lord Passfield, the Secretary of State, his own observations on the proposals together with the criticisms of the Legislative Council. The Secretary of State ruled that the State Council should consist of 50 members territorially elected and 8 members nominated, 4 of whom were to be Europeans. Every man and woman over 21 was to be granted the vote subject to the test of domicile. The Executive Committee System and the Governor's powers were approved. After further consideration, the weight of opinion favoured the acceptance of the British offer, even though it was considered that the proposals were in many respects defective. The proposals were accordingly accepted by the Legislative Council, 19 voting for and 17 against. The Donoughmore Constitution came into force under Sir Graeme Thomson (1931—33).

Nobody, however, was quite satisfied with the new constitution. The more important objections to it were the Governor's reserved powers in matters of Defence, External Affairs and the rights of the minorities. The Officers of State enjoyed privileges which the elected Ministers did not. "The Officers of State," said the Ministers' Memorandum of 1935 to the Secretary of State, Malcolm

MacDonald, "regard themselves as officials who owe their allegiance to the Governor and accordingly have to account for their administration not to the Council but to the Governor alone to whom they claim to be directly and solely responsible." Finally, the Public Services Commission being composed of the three Officers of State only, the elected Ministers had no effective control over this highly expensive establishment, which absorbed about 60 per cent. of the public revenue annually. For reasons such as these, the movement for reform continued. In 1937 the Secretary of State requested the Governor, Sir Andrew Caldecott, to investigate the working of the constitution and to submit his recommendations. Sir Andrew's proposals, which included the abolition of the Executive Committee System and the establishment of the Cabinet system of Government, were inconclusively debated in Council. The Secretary of State therefore postponed further consideration of matters till the end of the World War II.

On 26th March, 1942, the State Council passed a resolution demanding Dominion Status. On May 26, 1943, the Secretary of State issued a declaration stating that the re-examination of Ceylon's constitution after the War "will be directed towards the grant to Ceylon.....of full responsible government under the Crown in all matters of internal administration." In view, however, of the Island's important strategic position, the British Government was "to retain control of the provision, construction, maintenance, security, staffing, manning and use of such defences, equipment, establishments and communications" as were deemed necessary "for the Military, Naval and Air Security including that of the Island." Ceylon's foreign policy was to be controlled and directed by the British Government; the Governor was to be vested with powers to direct defence measures and foreign policy, to protect racial and religious communities and to direct matters relating to currency and trade, transport and communications affecting any part of the Empire. Once the War was won, His Majesty's Government would proceed "to examine by suitable Commission or Conference such detailed proposals as the Ministers may in the meantime have been able to formulate in the way of a complete constitutional scheme." In fine, the British Government was prepared to grant full responsible government to Ceylon in matters of internal civil administration, but would not trust her with such matters as Defence, External Relations and the fair treatment of the minorities.

On 2nd February, 1944, the Ministers submitted the draft of a Constitution to Sir Andrew Caldecott. The Ministers had construed the phrase, "full responsible government in matters of internal civil administration," to mean that Ceylon would have complete control over internal and external affairs subject to the Governor's reserve powers. Their draft accordingly was that of a Dominion Constitution to which were added clauses conferring the stipulated reserve powers. Governor Caldecott, however, would not agree with this interpretation of the 1943 Declaration, and the Ministers withdrew their draft in August, 1944. Nevertheless a month later the British Government announced the appointment of a Commission "to visit Ceylon in order to examine and discuss any proposals for constitutional reforms in the Island and after consultation with various interests in the Island to advise His Majesty's Government on all measures necessary to attain that object." The Commission, under the Chairmanship of Lord Soulbury, came to Ceylon in December, 1944, carried on its inquiries till April, 1945, and published its report on 9th October, 1945.

The Commissioners proposed that the Government of Ceylon consist of a Governor-General with reserved powers, and a Cabinet with an Upper and a Lower House ; universal adult suffrage was to be retained, the question of the suffrage of Indian immigrants being regarded as a matter relating to internal administration ; a Delimitation Commission was to define the new electoral districts; the Lower House was to consist of 95 elected members together with 6 who would be nominated—the members of the Lower House being designated Members of Parliament; the Upper House consisting of 30 members—15 elected by the Lower House and 15 nominated by the Governor-General—was to be called the Senate ; the Cabinet of Ministers was to possess full responsibility in matters of internal administration; a Prime Minister was to be appointed by the Governor-General; Public Services appointments were to be made on the recommendations of a Public Services Commission which would be nominated by the Governor-General in his discretion; the Chief Justice and Judges of the Supreme Court were to be appointed by the Governor-General acting in his discretion, with a Judicial Services Commission to advise him regarding subordinate judicial appointments. The conventions obtaining in British Parliamentary and governmental practice were to be followed, where appropriate.

In short the Commissioners accepted the Ministers' draft of 1944 in principle, but added a Senate and minority safeguards and modified the "Dominion" provisions outlined by the Ministers. In August and September, 1944, Mr. D. S. Senanayake conducted negotiations in London, as a result of which, on October 31st, 1945, a White Paper on the Constitution was issued. "His Majesty's Government," it said, "are in sympathy with the desire of the people of Ceylon to advance towards Dominion Status and they are anxious to co-operate with them to that end." Further, the British Government hoped "that the new Constitution will be accepted by the people of Ceylon with a determination so to work it that in a comparatively short space of time such Dominion Status will be evolved."

In November, 1945, Mr. D. S. Senanayake submitted a revised draft, and an Order in Council in 1946 awarded a Constitution based on this draft. It was fundamentally a Dominion Constitution with reduced reserve powers added to it. Once these reserve powers were removed and a few formal alterations were effected, Ceylon would enjoy the status of a Dominion. By an agreement arrived at in July, 1947, the Constitutional practices applied to other Dominions, and the provisions of the Statute of Westminster, were to be extended to Ceylon. Finally on 4th February, 1948, the reserve powers which had hitherto been functions of the Governor's Office were transferred to the Prime Minister's Office. And thus, after one hundred and fifty three years of Colonial Status, Ceylon passed into Dominion Status.

"Isn't it wonderful what you can do with a scrap of paper?" said Ivor Kreuger, the Swedish Match King, who defrauded investors of France, U.S.A. and his own country of at least £100,000,000 and then committed suicide. Isn't it wonderful, may we not ask, how you can sway people with a meaningless phrase? Now that the shouting and flag-waving for the gift of Dominion Status to Ceylon are over, may we not be just ungrateful enough to examine the gift horse in the mouth? "Dominion Status" is a meaningless phrase, as was admirably emphasised during the debate on India in the House of Lords in October, 1942, when Viscount Samuel said: "The phrase Dominion Status is meaningless and should be dropped in favour of such a term as 'National Status'."

In the course of the same debate, the Lord Chancellor, Lord Simon, replying on behalf of the Government, said: "I am rather inclined to agree with Lord Samuel when he deprecated the use of the

word Dominion, in this matter. If anybody reads through the Simon report, he will not find anything about Dominion Status from the beginning to the end. I quite realise that the conception is misunderstood."

Support is given to this view by Professor Coupland in his pamphlet on the Cripps Mission. He says: "Congressmen did not want India to be described as a Dominion. The Dominions were 'new countries,' creations of yesterday, products for the most part of British colonisation, and peopled by 30 million altogether. It was absurd, except on purely constitutional grounds, to bracket them with India, with an ancient and indigenous civilisation." Professor Coupland thinks this criticism is justified.

Dominions were originally Colonies inhabited mainly by people of British origin with British habits and political traditions. Canada, Australia, New Zealand are over 90 per cent. British in the matter of racial origin. It is, therefore, obvious that they should be satisfied with a status that retains them within the British Commonwealth of Nations. South Africa, less than half British in race, is divided in opinion regarding the suitability for her of this status. Eire is on the whole opposed to it and inclined towards an independent republic. The reason again is racial and also religious. Eire is Roman Catholic in religion and 90 per cent. Celtic in race. The Irish Free State under De Valera has claimed total independence, abolished the Oath of Allegiance and Privy Council appeals, established its own Seal, and, above all, as the culminating act of sovereignty, it remained neutral in the last World War.

Ulster, on the contrary, is predominantly populated by the descendants of Scots settlers. And Ulster is strongly in favour of remaining within the British Commonwealth. Thus it is clearly seen that the real basis of Dominion Status, the rock on which it rests for popular support, is racial and religious affinity. This is well illustrated from the case of Canada, where the only opposition to Dominion Status comes from the non-British and Roman Catholic element—the French Canadians of Quebec and Montreal.

The case of Ceylon shows an even more drastic divergence in race, religion, language and culture than does the case of Eire. Moreover, Ireland, willingly or unwillingly, was part and parcel of the British domains for more than seven hundred years, whereas the British regime in Ceylon dates back for only one and a half centuries. It should, therefore, be clear that the continued alignment of Ceylon, as a Dominion, with the British Commonwealth is entirely artificial.

Nevertheless certain sections of our people, having accepted the offer of Dominion Status for Ceylon, say that it is the same as Swaraj or National Freedom. Those who argue thus approach the problem in a narrow, though constitutional and purely legal way. They maintain that the Statute of Westminster allows a Dominion all rights except those reserved for the Royal Prerogative. As these prerogatives are also reserved in Britain, it follows that Dominions are equal with Britain and really free countries. In any case, the Statute of Westminster allows a Dominion the right of secession, which it can exercise if it is not content with the existing state of affairs. So run the arguments of this school of thought.

In the Balfour Report occurs the famous Declaration which appears in the preamble to the Statute of Westminster: "The Dominions are autonomous communities within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown, and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations." This Declaration had all the advantages of flexibility and ambiguity. It could be all things to all men, it embodied with admirable skill the difference of emphasis which each Dominion wished to place upon the term of its status. It is to be noted that, in this Declaration, there is no reference to the phrase Dominion Status nor is this defined anywhere in the Balfour Report.

The history of how Dominions came into existence, and an analysis of the part they play in an imperialist economy, will show how hollow and unreal are the arguments of those who advocate Dominion Status for Ceylon, instead of Freedom.

As opposed to colonies proper which, like Ceylon, are exploited by the Imperialists primarily as markets for their commodities, as sources of raw material and as spheres for export of capital, Dominions have come into existence in two main ways.

Either, like Australia or Canada, they have served as colonising regions for the surplus populations of the Imperialist country and thus become a continuation of their capitalist system. In such cases, the indigenous populations of the country were for the most part exterminated, and capitalist development reproduced, among the white population, the class structure of the Imperial country.

Or, like South Africa, New Zealand, etc., a type of Dominion has come into existence where, alongside a numerous native

population, there exists a considerable population of white colonists. The capitalist class in these countries represents a colonial extension of the metropolitan capitalist class, and the interests of the two coincide to a considerable extent.

The case of Eire previous to its secession from the Commonwealth is often quoted by our advocates of Dominion Status. But they forget that this status was granted on the basis of the partition of the industrialised North from the backward and agrarian South, leaving Eire economically at the mercy of Great Britain.

Nor do they remember that the Dominions' enjoyment of equal or nearly equal rights in law as members of the same Imperial system is due, firstly, to the fact that the capitalist class of the Imperial country is to a certain extent interested in strengthening its capitalist subsidiary in the Dominions, particularly when this subsidiary is successful in enslaving or even in completely destroying the original native population; and, secondly, that the competition between various imperialist systems of influence in the Dominions frequently compels the metropolitan Imperialism to reconcile itself to a certain economic and political independence in its agencies in such Dominions.

Let those who are satisfied with Dominion Status ponder on these facts, and not delude themselves with talk of legal rights without examining the political and economic factors which made them possible and necessary. They will then see that in Ceylon, where the form of Imperialist rule was different, where the economic development of the country was deliberately held back by Imperialism, our ultimate goal should be not Dominion Status, but Independence, and a constitution, not imported from Whitehall, but drafted by a Constituent Assembly.

On 30th July, 1951, a deputation from the All-Ceylon Buddhist Congress led by its President, Dr. G. P. Malalasekera, met the Prime Minister Mr. D. S. Senanayake and requested that a Commission be appointed to inquire into the present state of Buddhism in Ceylon and the steps to be taken to restore Buddhism to the paramount position which it should occupy in Ceylon. Dr. Malalasekera initiating the discussion said that, under successive foreign governments; Buddhism had suffered great damage and the Buddhists had been subjected to various disabilities; he, therefore, felt that with the winning of freedom the Buddhists have a right to expect that Buddhism should be restored to its original position in the country, and its adherents be given every facility to rehabilitate themselves.

The Prime Minister agreed with this view and undertook to appoint a Commission and asked the deputation to submit to him the names of a panel of laymen to be considered by him for nomination to the Commission. He added that he reserved to himself the right to decide whether or not bhikkhus should also be represented on the Commission and to determine the method of selecting their representatives.

At a subsequent meeting the Prime Minister told the deputation that he had doubts as to whether the Commission he had agreed to appoint could be appointed without violating the Constitution ; and he referred to paragraph (2) (c) and (d) of Section 29 of the Ceylon (Constitution) Order in Council, 1946. Mr. Senanayake informed the delegates that he would have to consult legal authority before he proceeded to fulfil the promise given earlier. This is a matter of grave concern for the Buddhists. Sir Ivor Jennings, who is regarded as one of the chief architects of the Ceylon (Constitution) Order in Council, has told us that in the framing of these particular provisions the Roman Catholic hierarchy was consulted and certain amendments were made to satisfy them. Sir Ivor does not mention that the Sangha was similarly consulted. But the Sangha knew, as long ago as 1946, that the rights which they had secured, for Buddhism and the Buddhists, in 1815, by the Kandyan Convention were being bartered away for the hollow pomp of Dominion Status.

The inside story of how Ceylon became a Dominion, and who were responsible for thrusting Dominion Status on the people of Ceylon, is told in the preface to a book, *The Constitution of Ceylon*, by Sir Ivor Jennings. "The process of development of the Ceylon Constitution of 1946—47 began on May 26, 1943, when, at the request of the Board of Ministers under the Donoughmore Constitution of 1931, the Government of the United Kingdom issued a Declaration of Policy on Constitutional Reform in Ceylon," states Sir Ivor.

He adds: "The same evening Mr. D. S. Senanayake (now Prime Minister), Sir Oliver Goonetilleke (now High Commissioner for Ceylon in London), and I had a discussion on the steps necessary to secure Dominion Status. At the end of it I found myself virtually enrolled as honorary constitutional adviser, and, though many others were called in to assist, I continued to fill that role until Independence was obtained on February 4, 1948.

“The constitutional scheme, usually known as the Ministers’ Draft, was prepared by me on Mr. Senanayake’s instructions. There were two versions of it subsequent to that published in Sessional Paper XIV of 1944. The first prepared in Cambridge in August, 1945, included the modifications suggested by the Soulbury Commission but omitted the limitations on self-government. It was submitted by Mr. Senanayake to the Secretary of State for Colonies as part of his case for Dominion Status.

“The second was prepared in Colombo after the issue of the White Paper on Constitutional Reform in October, 1945. It was designed to support the legal interpretation which Mr. Senanayake was advised to make in his speech to the State Council recommending the acceptance of the offer.”

We have here a clue to those who were acting behind the scenes for foisting Dominion Status on Ceylon. Sir Ivor Jennings, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ceylon, author of a work on the British Constitution, and an out-and-out Imperialist, could not have suggested any other solution to the constitutional problem. Sir Oliver Goonetilleke was a prominent layman of the Anglican Church which considered any relaxation of the British hold on Ceylon as a blow to the Church. The migration of Bishop Horsley during this time to London was commented upon in local circles as an attempt to safeguard what the Church has come to consider as a vested interest of theirs. And Mr. D. S. Senanayake was one of those temperance workers who took to politics after the Riots of 1915. Having, in the course of his long political career, realized the deplorable condition of his fellow countrymen, Mr. Senanayake was prepared to agree to anything proposed to him by the British Government, provided the way was cleared for national representative men to get into the stride of political predominance in the country.

The sincerity of Mr. Senanayake in the course he adopted is unquestionable. He agreed to every condition the British imposed because he thought that would give him a free hand to ameliorate, according to his lights, the conditions of his unfortunate countrymen. Lenin once declared that the verdict of history would be in his favour for the course he adopted to liberate his fellowmen from the Tsarist yoke and to bring them to a fuller life. But we are sure that, whatever the verdict of history may be in the case of Mr. Senanayake, it will not be in favour of that group of men which clambered into

the contraption known as the United National Party which Mr. Senanayake formed. Some of them, unlike him, were, in reality, careerists with no desire for genuine freedom, but were only seeking means to satisfy their craving for power.

Since Ceylon was completely conquered by the British in 1815, the people have longed to free themselves from the yoke of a foreign conqueror. They rose in armed rebellion against the rule of the conqueror in 1818. They were defeated. Again in 1848, under the leadership of Gongalagoda Banda, the people rose to overthrow the rule of the aggressor. It was an armed rebellion. Even this time superior arms and organization crushed the struggle of the people for national freedom. Then commenced an era of imperialist exploitation of the country in which the propertied classes began to share. They became willing and loyal subjects of British Imperialism and acquiesced in the *status quo*. But the Sangha, who kept alive the smouldering embers of national spirit, was not prepared to compromise on the freedom issue.

In the 1942 sessions of the Ceylon National Congress held at Kelaniya, a resolution was brought forward that the ultimate goal of Lanka should be national freedom. To this Mr. D. S. Senanayake, who was then a member of the Congress, was opposed, on the ground that Ceylon's goal should be Dominion Status within the Commonwealth, but he was outvoted and the resolution adopted, whereupon Mr. Senanayake resigned from the Congress.

When Mr. Senanayake accepted Dominion Status from the British, several of those who had voted at the 1942 National Congress for full freedom, and had helped to defeat Mr. Senanayake's advocacy of Dominion Status, deserted their former position and joined in the hunt for power. They then turned on the bhikkhus who had originally supported their aims, branded them as "political bhikkhus," and began a campaign of abuse of those who stood for national freedom for Ceylon. Some of these politicians even went to the extent of intimidating those of the Sangha who had the courage to tell the people that Dominion Status was not true freedom.

In the light of these facts the general situation in Ceylon today is not really surprising. True freedom, or rather the desire for it, is the root cause of the present unrest in Lanka and trouble all over South and South-East Asia.

Many years ago the late Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, Prime Minister of England during the reign of King Edward VII, speaking

on the Irish question, said rather profoundly that it was not enough that men should be free, but that they must also be made to feel free. At that time Irishmen certainly enjoyed what to the Germans, during the Nazi regime, would have seemed an enormous measure of freedom. They had freedom of speech to such a point that any Irishman could advocate the establishment of a republic; they had freedom of election; they had freedom of movement, not only in their own country, but all over the world; they were free to talk in their homes what is called treason, with no Gestapo listening at the keyhole. Yet, somehow, though they enjoyed a great deal of individual freedom, they did not feel free.

It was thought for a time in England that they would begin to feel free if they were released from the domination of landlords. The British Exchequer, therefore, advanced nearly £100,000,000 to put into operation the Land Purchase Act, designed to convert the Irish tenant into the owner of his holding—"An excellent instance," said Mr. Lloyd George who negotiated the treaty with the Irish Free State, "of the sincere effort made by Great Britain during the last half century to atone for the grievous wrong inflicted on the Irish people by English misrule in the past." But the fact was that what the Irish had set their hearts on was another kind of freedom, *National Freedom*. And this is the very freedom which the people of Lanka are longing for.

We all feel enslaved if we have not the particular kind of freedom we want. Some people can never understand this. They think that we are unreasonable, and that the freedom of which we dream is no better than a mirage; but in the meantime we are like the child in the Victorian advertisement, trying to reach for the soap that has fallen outside the bath. The older generation will remember the picture of the squalling child and the inscription beneath it: "He won't be happy till he gets it."

The Sangha, who had guided the people of Lanka for over twenty centuries, declared that the real freedom of Lanka must involve a complete break with the British Crown. Allegiance to the King of England is the fundamental link in an otherwise heterogeneous collection of nations which goes by the name of the British Commonwealth of Nations. The Sangha was not prepared to recognise the King of England as the King of Lanka; they said: "The King of England has to profess Protestant Christianity and is the Defender of that Faith. The Kings of Lanka have always been Buddhists and the Defenders of the National Faith of Ceylon.

How can the King of England be Defender of both Christianity and Buddhism ? ” The Sangha was not agreeable to sacrifice the national interest for the pomp of Dominion Status.

That the Sangha had more imagination than the politicians has been proved by the case of India. India, too, had to face a similar situation, but she had the moral courage to fight the battle to the end. When she declared herself a Republic, the Dominion Prime Ministers found a formula giving equality of Commonwealth Membership to both kingdoms and republics. In the joint declaration issued by the Prime Ministers, it was stated that India, with the other countries, would continue to accept the special status of the King as the symbol of free association of the member states and as such the head of the Commonwealth, but India would owe no allegiance to the Crown ; and the President of Republican India would not be the representative of the King, but would himself express the sovereign will of the people of India.

India entered the Commonwealth of Nations on her own conditions. Firstly, her complete independence as a republic was not to be compromised in any way by Commonwealth co-operation. Secondly, there could be no question of Commonwealth co-operation involving her in a military alliance. Thirdly, in keeping with Commonwealth traditions, problems of international policy would be taken up on their merits as they might arise.

The Ceylon Independence Act, 1947, of the Parliament of Britain does not confer national freedom on Ceylon. It does not raise Ceylon to the status of a free and sovereign State. It does not confer on Ceylon independent nationhood. It does not grant separate national existence to Ceylon. It does not make Ceylon a national entity in the sense of an independent national State outside the British Empire. The Act of the Parliament of Britain merely confers on Ceylon the status of a self-governing member of the British Empire. The Parliament of Britain relinquishes all legislative power over Ceylon. The Governor-General will continue to be appointed by Whitehall. Ceylon's connection with the British Empire remains unimpaired. Indirect rule is substituted for direct rule. The flag of the British Empire, the Union Jack, will continue to flutter over Ceylon, whilst the metamorphosed Lion Flag will fly in the shadow of the Union Jack.

The Sangha was not prepared to emulate the politicians ; but in keeping with their traditional peaceful way of attaining their object, they gathered at the spot sanctified by the touch of the feet of the

Master, the ancient Kelaniya Temple, on the 6th of January, 1947, (the day the country was celebrating the anniversary of the Buddha's first visit to Lanka), and took a big step forward: a Proclamation was read which declared that Sri Lanka is a Free and Independent Sovereign State. This Declaration has now become historic as the Kelaniya Declaration of Independence (See Appendix One). It was a symbolic act, a gesture which captured the imagination of the people and convinced them that true independence was something worth fighting for or even dying for.

There are those who say that they obtained "Independence" for Ceylon without any bloodshed. The terrible truth is that no nation or race or caste ever won its liberty, whether in Ceylon or Ireland or any other country, without either the shedding of blood or the use or the threat of violence. Those who claim deliverance for Lanka have no conception what freedom actually is, they have merely fallen into their present positions in spite of themselves like a cannon at billiards. The men who actually set the ball rolling for the eventual freedom of Lanka were those who were martyred by the British after the 1915 Riots; they died that others may live in freedom: "Their name liveth for evermore."

Here ends the *Nidāna Kathā*, or "The Introductory Story."

APPENDIX ONE

THE KELANIYA DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE—JANUARY 6, 1947

Hail

The Declaration of the Sangha of Sri Lanka

Twenty-five centuries ago, our forefathers established in Sri Lanka a state of Society, Free, Independent and Sovereign, in order to ensure to the people security of Life and Liberty on the one hand, and on the other the right as well as opportunity to seek and obtain Happiness. A few centuries later, the Sangha, the Treasurers of the eternal values proclaimed by the Buddha, became the Guardians of the Life and Liberty as well as the Sponsors of the Well-being and Happiness of that Society.

Nations and civilizations are not eternal. They rise, flourish, decay and die. Nothing in this world can be regarded as eternal. There are values higher than cities and nations, and our country has always stood for these values. Mere material possessions are not the '*sine qua non*' of happiness. No measures or quantities of these can give that essential quality of happiness which constitutes the real dignity of mankind.

Four and a half centuries ago, 'disturbers of the peace of mankind' from the West not only challenged the right of the people of this Island to their way of life and liberty, but also attempted to introduce into it ideals other than those which this country had always stood for. It is our glory that the country never had any dearth of men inspired with the spirit of Sri Lanka. These outstanding leaders of the nation accepted the challenge, and fierce struggles by the people against the foreigners ensued during three whole centuries.

Thereafter a section of the community, arrogating to themselves an authority that had not the sanction of the will of the nation, ceded the country to the last of the alien aggressors, who have since dominated over it to the loss of liberty and happiness of its people. Posterity, however, cannot be deprived of the inherent rights which peoples acquire when they form themselves into a state of civilized society, by the act or acts, or Compact, or Convention entered into by any group of men in the near or remote past.

And the people, who for 131 years have been denied their inherent rights, are not content, today, to be fettered any longer or to remain under an alien yoke.

We, therefore, the Sangha of Sri Lanka, the Guardians of the Life and Liberty and Sponsors of the Well-being and Happiness of the people of this Island, assembled on this hallowed spot sanctified by the touch of the feet of the Master, do hereby declare and publish, on behalf of the people, that Sri Lanka claims its right to be a Free and Independent Sovereign State, that it has resolved to absolve itself from all allegiance to any other Power, State or Crown, and that all political connection between it and any other State, is hereby dissolved; and that as a Free and Independent Sovereign State it has full right to safeguard its Freedom and Independence, to contract alliances and do all other acts and things which Independent States may of right do.

For due recognition of the rectitude of our action and for support of the claim made under this Declaration, we, the Sangha of Sri Lanka, hereby appeal to the conscience and sense of justice of all right-thinking peoples of the world. And in hereby calling upon the good people of Sri Lanka, on whose behalf we make this Declaration, unitedly and in courage and strong endeavour to see to it that its purpose is achieved in the fullest possible measure, we, the Sangha of Sri Lanka, on our part, pledge ourselves to associate with them in spirit as well as in action in that great and high resolve.

Declared on this auspicious anniversary of the Buddha's first visit to Sri Lanka, Monday, the full-moon day of Durutu, in the year 2490 of the Buddhist era in the new *Gandhakuti* (Fragrant Chamber) of the Sri Kalyani Raja Maha Vihara.

PART II

KALYĀNA MAGGA

“THE PATH OF HAPPINESS”

“ Be ye to yourselves, O Ananda, your own torch, your own refuge ; seek no other refuge. Let the truth be your torch and your refuge, seek no other refuge.....

“ And whosoever, O Ananda, either now or after I am dead, shall be a torch unto themselves, and a refuge unto themselves, and shall seek no other refuge ; whosoever taketh the truth as his torch and his refuge, and shall seek no other refuge, such will henceforth, O Ananda, be My true disciples, who walk in the right Path.”

—THE BUDDHA

THE PATH OF HAPPINESS

Honour to Him, the Master, the Exalted, the Buddha Supreme.

Chapter I

INTRODUCTORY—THE ETERNAL QUEST

*The glory groweth of the Courageous
Who, with Purity of Heart and Tolerance
And with Self-control and Discipline,
Strive for a Better Life.*

*By conscious pursuit of Truth and Right
And by Righteousness of Action and Living,
The wise man may make for himself an Island
Which no flood can overwhelm.**

Thus it was spoken by the Buddha Supreme.

“To Russia he left a social structure capable of development to unlimited extent. To the rest of the world he left a serious problem which mankind must speedily solve,” writes James Maxton, M.P., in his *Life of Lenin*, and then proceeds to ask these two questions:

- “ CAN HUMANITY PROGRESS
TO HIGHER SOCIAL FORMS
WITHOUT COLLAPSE OF EXISTING FORMS
ENTAILING WIDESPREAD SUFFERING ?
- “ CAN MAN BY FORCE OF INTELLIGENCE
GO FORWARD TO BETTER THINGS,
OR MUST HE PROCEED BY WAY OF
STRUGGLE, VIOLENCE AND BRUTE FORCE ?”

“The liberation of the oppressed class is impossible not only without violent revolution but also without the destruction of the apparatus of State powers. The State must be replaced by a special repressive force of the proletariat for the suppression of the bourgeoisie,” says Lenin in *The State and Revolution*.

*See *Dhammapada*, verses 24 and 25.

“History is on the side of Lenin’s view,” says Maxton in his *Life of Lenin*, and he goes on to add: “At every big change in social structure there has been an open clash of opposing forces. He himself was a personification of brain force, the force of the idea defeating immeasurably superior force of arms. The German military might, the military power of Britain and France placed behind the insurgents in Russia, were beaten more by the power of his mind and his idea than by the military organisation that he could bring to bear against them. Yet he, among all his associates, proclaimed most definitely the absolute necessity of physical force as an unavoidable incident in the creation of a new social order.”

In this turbulent world, all our struggles for “*higher Social Forms*,” all our strivings for “*Better Things*” have, for their ultimate object, in the last analysis, no more and no less than a fair chance of happiness, for ourselves as individuals, and for the rest if possible. Commerce by high finance: Treachery by high diplomacy: Warfare by high explosives or Revolution by high violence has that as its final purpose.

All mass immigrations, all political theories, all dominating overlordships, all human conflicts, all “liberation of oppressed classes” and all “new social orders” are inspired by the belief that, upon their successful issue, depends the happiness of great numbers of men and women. That is the eternal quest of mankind.

Chapter II

THE BIRTH OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Some 3,000 million years ago a rare event took place. A star, wandering blindly through space, happens to come within hailing distance of the sun. Just as the sun and moon raise tides on the earth, so this star raises tides on the surface of the sun. But they are very different from the puny tides which the small mass of the moon raises in our oceans; a huge tidal wave travels over the surface of the sun, ultimately forming a mountain of prodigious height, which rises ever higher and higher as the cause of the disturbance comes nearer and nearer. And, before the star begins to recede, its tidal pull has become so powerful that this mountain is torn to pieces and throws off small fragments of itself, much as the crest of a wave throws off spray.

These fragments have been circulating around their parent sun ever since. They are the planets, of which our earth is one. It was born in a form in which we should find it hard to recognise the solid earth of today with its seas and rivers, its rich vegetation and overflowing life. Our home in space came into being as a globe of intensely hot gas on which no life of any kind could either gain or retain a foothold.

Gradually this globe of gas cools down, becoming first liquid, then plastic. Finally its outer crust solidifies, rocks and mountains forming a permanent record of the irregularities of its earlier plastic form. Vapours condense into liquids, and rivers and oceans come into being, while an atmosphere is formed out of the so-called "permanent" gases—oxygen, nitrogen, helium, neon. Gradually the earth assumes a condition suited to the advent of life, which finally appears, we know not how, whence or why.

Modern science text-books state that the newly cooled earth some 2,000 million years ago was lifeless, and that life originated spontaneously in the primeval ocean. At some moment or other a chance assembly of the right molecules comes together in this primeval ocean and forms the first living particle capable of nourishing and reproducing itself. The original primitive form develops into a cell. This cell develops the power of building chlorophyll, thus making its own food-like plants. The cells then develop means of locomotion and digestion and join each other in a simple colony. So, from the single-celled organism evolve the multi-celled creatures, of which man is one.

It is not easy to estimate the time since life first appeared on earth, but it can hardly have been more than a small fraction of the whole 3,000 million years or so during which the earth has been in existence. Still, there was probably life on earth at least 300 million years ago, and possibly as far back as 1,000 million years ago. The first life was wholly aquatic, but gradually fishes changed into reptiles, reptiles into mammals, and finally man emerged from mammals. The emergence of man from the ape-like condition is calculated to have taken place many hundreds of thousands of years ago. Organic life has existed on the earth for about 1,000 million years, but *Homo Sapiens* as a product of its evolution can be traced back to a stage of less than 100,000 years. Thus life has inhabited the earth for only a fraction of its existence, and man for only a tiny fraction of this fraction.

An impressive illustration of the short period of human tenancy of the earth was given in an address by Prof. James Ritchie. Taking the twelve hours on the dial of a clock to represent the last 1200 million years of the earth's existence, early forms of life would cover the period from midnight to seven o'clock. From this hour until 11.15 fishes and amphibia, reptiles, birds and mammals would successively develop and predominate, with primitive man making his appearance at less than a minute before noon, and our own species less than a second and a half ago. On this time-scale, the period from our Neolithic ancestors of about ten thousand years ago to the present epoch is represented by about one-third of a second.

The human race, from its obscure beginning to its unknown end, is only a second's episode in the life of the universe. As geological time goes, it is but a moment since the human race began and only the twinkling of an eye since the arts of civilization were first invented. So, here we are, then, children of yesterday and of "chance and misery."

The universe has brought us into existence, which is, of course, the fundamental thing, the basis of everything. Life, however, we have discovered, is not enough. Simply to be, to exist, is not in itself sufficient. We ask for more than existence, we ask for a happy existence, free from all vexation—in a word for heaven.

For some reason, Nature, possibly because she had done all she could, probably for some other and profounder reason, having given us life, stayed her hand, with the unfortunate results we see. She produced a world, but thoughtlessly failed or neglected to produce

a Paradise, leaving that undertaking to us ; the making of a heaven for ourselves—a difficult business. And the best we have been able to do so far is to create a dream-world, a world of the imagination, superior in a number of ways to the world in which we actually live, much pleasanter if less substantial.

Of what are we in search ? Peace of mind. We desire to be at home in a friendly world, we desire a reconciliation, a harmony between ourselves and our surroundings. It might well, indeed, be asked, how came we at all to entertain the notion that life should present to us a countenance wreathed in perpetual smiles, why should we expect unearned, eternal good, world good, throughout good for everyone, at all times and for ever ? Apparently we do expect it as a birth-right.

How did we come to pitch our requirements so high ? The other animals placidly accept things as they are. The spirit of man, one might think, has strayed out of its native country into a dry and thirsty land, and recalls its happier childhood. Like the traveller lost in the desert, it revisits in dreams the country known in earlier days, or was it before birth ?

The Twentieth Century has witnessed the revival of legalized slavery, torture, forced migration, heresy-hunting, persecution for opinion and censorship. After analysing the more than 900 international wars and the more than 1,600 domestic broils recorded during the last twenty-five centuries, Professor P. A. Sorokin came to the conclusion that our own age was by far the bloodiest in history. And yet, in spite of all that has happened in the course of the last fifty years, the idea of progress still lives on.

Why are people at the present time so confident about human progress ? The idea of progress is, after all, quite new. The Greeks did not entertain it. The Stoics held a cyclical theory, according to which everything would happen over and over again. Thus, Marcus Aurelius says: "He who sees what now is has seen all, all that was from eternity, all that shall be without end." The early Christians tended to think of the Golden Age as lying in the past. They looked for no progress in this world which they expected to end at any time.

"Julian the Apostate", said Professor Macneile Dixon in his Gifford Lectures delivered at the University of Glasgow, "was of opinion, and it is not a manifest absurd belief, that the happiness of mankind would be increased by a return to earlier and more primitive conditions, that the human race should endeavour to

forget its gains, and retrace its steps in time. Julian's thought, that the Golden Age lay behind us, has its echoes in Rousseau, and reverberates through the Christian scheme itself. The miseries of man arose, the story goes, from the eating of the fruit of knowledge. But the peculiar and mysterious fact is that, however poisonous, we continue to crave for it, to believe it the healthiest diet, and to consume it with eager appetites ; even to be convinced that it is medicinal, a sovereign remedy for all our diseases."

Not a few men have clung passionately to the hope we all share, that the nearer to the truth the nearer to happiness, yet so far the fruit of the tree of knowledge seems to have added little to human felicity. Indeed, some powerful thinkers have declared that he 'who increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow', and that truth is a synonym for disillusionment.

Centuries ago, in an age not unlike our own, when the established world was cracking, a long period of peace was coming to an end, and a dream of civilized order and unity was dying, Boethius, a Roman philosopher and scholar, sat at his desk and contemplated his changing world with a troubled and uneasy mind. He wrote a poem, full of the questions that were besieging him. How can this truth be reconciled to that truth ? This right to that right ? How can all these conflicting facts be adjusted in one man's thought ? Near the end of the poem, as a desperate acknowledgment of the dilemma, though not a solution, come these lines:

And therefore whoso seeks the truth
Shall find in no wise peace of heart.

And the reaction to all this mental uneasiness which ignores the limits of humanity is the scepticism that can see nothing beyond : "where the whole or unalloyed truth cannot be found, no truth, or at any rate no certain truth, can be found."

What profit, then, to pursue the phantom quest ? It is written in the book of fate that we should do so. We question things that we may fulfil our destiny, satisfy the inward craving, pick up, as Newton said, "a few pebbles on the shore of the great ocean," avoid absurdities, estimate probabilities, the better to provide for our necessities here and now, in our present state.

The intellect is man's burden, but not less his pride. With the emergence of mind in us, living creatures, rose up immediately the cosmic problems, those staring spectres, and the human spirit is

like the terrified magician, who had learnt the formula which conjured up the spirits from the vasty deep, but not the spells which quelled or bound them.

Before the advent of the enquiring intelligence there was peace. No questions were asked by the early inhabitants of the earth, by the dreaming mosses or the plants, nor among the happy-go-lucky lower animals. Thinking it was that, upon its arrival, became entangled in a maze of its own construction. It discovered the perplexities of the world, and propounded the problems only to find that it must itself supply the answers. Perhaps—who knows?—we might have been happier, happy as children are happy, had the intellect never awakened in us to propound its troublesome questions.

How unfortunate, some theologians tell us, that man gave way to mental curiosity, and so forfeited his happy lot in the Garden of Eden, rising to a level of intelligence above the lowlier, unambitious animals, content with pasture, with the satisfactions of food and sex. They fared better, and ours, but for the great aboriginal catastrophe, would have been a like existence, without expectations or searchings of heart, without souls embittered by fruitless desires. The knowledge of good and evil was the fatal departure from the original design—Nature's error, or, as in the Christian view, the fault of man himself. The pursuit of wisdom brought misery, and to intelligence was attached a penalty.

There is a saying that Nature does nothing in vain. Yet if she created automatic machines, and some thinkers like the determinists insist we are no more, why did she proceed to the blunder, for assuredly a blunder it was, of conferring upon them an unnecessary sensitivity to pain and pleasure? Without sensitivity machines work very well. How much better had she been content with insensate things. But we are not stones or trees, and in making sensitive beings Nature went clean out of her way. Consciousness is an unpardonable blot upon her scheme, and for this philosophy an inexplicable enigma.

So it is that, in the midst of Nature, man appears not as her child, but as a changeling. Exiled from his native home of innocence, elevated to kingly rank in the creation, the bond between mother and son was snapped. She reared a disappointed and rebellious child, a critic of his parent, judging her morals detestable, counselling, as did Huxley, resistance to her rule and defiance of her authority. Cosmic nature, he declares, is 'no school of virtue,' but the headquarters of its enemy.

With the dawn of intelligence, and not till then, arose the dark suspicions of the worth of life, and the formidable problems of religion and ethics took their present shape. With these problems our fellow-creatures, the lower animals, are placidly unconcerned. For all living creatures, save ourselves, life is sufficient. Here then is a mystery deeper than most—the quarrel of life with the conditions of life, the revolt of mankind. The intellect arrives, and with its arrival, strange to tell, contentment fades. It brings tempest on its wings.

A lowering day it was, an ugly day it must have been, when the first man stood face to face with the idea of the worthlessness and absurdity of life, when it dawned upon him that the oranges were sour. On that date a chasm opened at his feet—the chasm of the unintelligible. Or not so much the unintelligible, which might after all be borne when the weather was not menacing, the air pleasant and food abundant. Not so much the unintelligible as the irrational, a deep uneasiness that the gods or Nature had played him false, that the cup of life but sparkled at the brim, the discovery that his wishes were forever to be met by hostile looks from Nature, by angry opposition from his neighbours, by projects incompatible with his own. How deep and natural is the instinct that all our desires should be at once fulfilled! Even the child in its cradle weeps at the oppositions offered to its every wish.

So, early in human history, man's quest of happiness was challenged, and there followed 'all the cursed, everlasting questions', as Dostoevsky called them. How to justify, men began to ask, their own seizure of the best, or how the conflicting purposes, their own with all the others, were to be harmonized, strife evaded, hatreds avoided, wars ended, unbroken happiness attained?

Questions in plenty throng upon us, questions to which no convincing answers have been given—the origin of things, the existence of God, time and space, the nature of mind, the meaning of life, the immortality of the soul. What is our business in the world, if we have any, and how are we to occupy ourselves while its tenants? An idle question, no doubt, for most men anxiously engaged, as the majority are engaged, in the task of keeping life and body together, clinging to life with apparently no other aim save clinging to life.

But can we indeed be said to have any task in the world at all? Is it to seek pleasure and happiness, or, setting these aside, to prepare ourselves for another and wholly different world to come?—

a question which has sharply divided opinion. If to find happiness here is the wise man's endeavour, how best can it be secured? If in another place, of what kind is it likely to be, and how are we to prepare ourselves for it? Should we concern ourselves with the lives of others, to compass their happiness, or pursue our own independently, seeking, after the manner of some ascetics and bhikkhus, an existence as far withdrawn as possible from the activities of human society?

If, on the other hand, it is of the community and our neighbours we should chiefly think, should we endeavour to provide what they tell us would satisfy them or what we, imagining ourselves armed with superior wisdom, think would be much better for them?

We are surrounded by specialists the most brilliant in every branch of human enquiry. But for a conspectus, a unifying creed, the plain man knows not where to look, and is plunged in a sea of perplexity. He reads one book to find its conclusions flatly contradicted by the next he opens.

How easy are generalisations, and how futile. Does kindness to animals, for example, which we are all persuaded is a duty, include kindness to the rabid dog and the plague infecting rat, the tsetse fly and the anopheles mosquito?

How in the face of this universal conflict is the individual to secure his own ends, how exist, expand, realise his innermost, his profoundest needs, without interference with lives and purposes no less justifiable than his own, without injury to them, without the destruction or subjugation of the rest, the vast concourse of other living creatures? Each and all have their moral rights to what existence offers. Every man has his case and his claims as undeniable as those of his neighbours. These questions have gathered in strength with the passage of time and history.

Since the Renaissance, there has been no such upheaval of thought, no such revaluation of values as in the century upon which we have entered. Now as then, within about fifty years, within the span of a single lifetime, all the old conceptions, the previous beliefs in religion, in science, in politics, have been wholly transformed; a change has taken place, we might almost say, in the inclination of the earth's orbit.

A time as remarkable as the one in which we are privileged to live must necessarily brighten the intelligence. Today is more than remarkable.

It is revolutionary.

THE EIGHTFOLD PATH

There are very few things on which it is possible to get men to agree. Perhaps there is only one thing which all men agree that they want. That is happiness. Wisdom may be above rubies in value, but happiness is always worth while—it is the “pearl of great price,” for in the word “happiness” is summed up all the desires, all the needs of mankind, yes, even of angels, or the gods themselves.

The demand for happiness has been so constant, the need for it so pressing and universally felt that, had it been at all easily attained, surely by now we should have understood how to secure it. Yet in this age of the “Four Freedoms” and of the Atom Bomb, 7,500 years or more since the emergence of the first definite forms of civilization, we do not seem to be getting any closer to happiness—quite the reverse. Evidently then, happiness is not something which simply happens.

Man’s quest of happiness goes on from age to age and the “pearl of great price” is never found. For the mind of man is never content, and in his spirit is a sword of pain. The more sensitive he becomes to the beauty and splendour of life, the more he suffers because of its inequalities, its tragedies and its horrors. The more he loves—and that is the only way in which he can fulfil his nature—the more he agonizes ; because love is itself a pain as well as a joy, caused by the essential loneliness of the individual and the thought of death. The more knowledge he acquires, the more elusive becomes the ultimate mystery of truth. As Athanasius once confessed, “the more he thought, the less he comprehended.” So with all of us. For the understanding in which we put our trust appears to recede with the increase of knowledge. We journey and never arrive.

On the walls of Kelaniya Temple are seen some of the masterpieces of a Sinhalese artist. There, on one wall, is depicted the “Birth of a Nation”, the Buddha on his deathbed, and Sakra and Vishnu receiving the Master’s command to protect Vijaya and Lanka. On another wall, is a whole panorama of the landing of Vijaya and his followers in Lanka. Let us suppose the Vihara inhabited by a colony of flies, to whom the pictures are familiar objects. They have crossed and recrossed them many times. They

perceive the irregularities of their surface. They may be aware of the varieties in the patches of colour, and possibly of the odour of the pigments employed by the artist. Knowledge in a certain sense of the pictures they may be said to have, but how much ? They have experience of some of their features, and scientific flies may have analysed, from a fly's view-point, their ingredients. Yet as to why they are there, or why those colours take those particular patterns they know and can know nothing. They see, indeed, all that is to be seen. There is no obstacle, no barrier between them and the wealth of artistry, of beauty and meaning in the paintings. None the less a sort of veil intervenes, so that of the scenes in the pictures ; the birth of the Sinhalese race to carry aloft the Torch, the setting in motion of what was destined to become a great civilization, they are and must forever remain ignorant. For them all this is eternally remote though near, and impenetrable though unguarded. The fault is not in the pictures, but in themselves; not in a thousand, nor in ten thousand lives can they cross the invisible and inviolable threshold. Even for the human observer, unless he is already in their secrets, they have no voice, and analysis of their physical features avails nothing. The deeper the analysis goes the further it wanders from the true path of understanding, even from entrance through its open gate to the labyrinthine corridors of past and present time.

So with us and the universe. The obstacle to our comprehension of its nature and structure and the laws governing it is nowhere else than in us ; the disability is ours. The banquet is spread, and nothing is denied us that we can take for ourselves, but we are "bound and leashed." "Just like a dog, Brethren," says the Buddha, "tied up by a leash to a stout pillar or stake. If it goes on it goes up to that pillar or stake. If it stands.....squats.... lies down.....it is close to that pillar or stake ; so is the human being, leashed and bound down."

Even thus disabled, philosophers and thinkers throughout the ages have attempted to picture Reality. And so far with what results ? The results, it may also be allowed, and as might be expected, are disappointingly sketchy, though among them a few bold drawings, by great masters of technique, from Plato's sweeping hand, or Hegel's, have attracted attention ; the majority of efforts being only as water spilt upon the ground. And, indeed, no one can be so bereft of intelligence as to enter light-heartedly upon such an undertaking, to suppose it within the compass of any man to

solve the over-whelming riddle of being, or to fancy that the best minds can do more than perceive the profundity of the abyss. Sir James Jeans observes that "modern physics tries to discover the pattern of events which controls the phenomena we observe. But we can never know what this pattern means or how it originates; and even if some superior intelligence were to tell us, we should find the explanation unintelligible. Our studies can never put us into contact with reality, and its true meaning and nature must be hidden from us."

Benedetto Croce, the Italian philosopher, says: "Man can only know that which he has experienced. He may believe, but he cannot know what lies beyond." What he could know was history—not a history of unique moments, but of time that flows without end. In Croce's philosophy, history, the only reality, is the unfolding of the human spirit itself, and experience the only test of truth. In the Croce interpretation, philosophy is no more than an exposition of history. He believed that men could hope to find no final truths. "No philosophical system is ever final, for life itself is never final." But as men live, he thinks, they come upon new fragments of truth, and each fragment must be placed in the ever-changing universal scheme. "So it has ever been," says Croce, "and so it will ever be."

We move in a world of assumptions that are almost as unnoticed as the air we breathe. Yet at moments every alert intelligence senses the void beneath these formulae, and asks with Pilate "What is truth?" Can we know anything outside the narrow circle of our own perceptions? How did life originate? What is the purpose of existence? Do the dead exist? Whither is humanity tending?—This anxiety of man to know the end is essentially human; it is a kind of infirmity of the mind, and has nothing in common with universal reality. The mind is certainly a part of reality, but the part is not the equal of the whole. There will remain throughout time, and beyond time, the final unaccountableness.

"That man can do so much as set about an inquiry into his own origins," writes Professor W. Macneile Dixon in *The Human Situation*, "is sufficiently astonishing, and his chief claim to dignity. That he should succeed is a fantastic notion, never on this side of sanity to be entertained. Enough that he has had the audacious fancy to spread his wings for such a flight. 'He who knows that he does not know,' says the proverb, 'is never a fool.' Reality is

not to be caught in the meshes of our human concepts and categories. The net we fling contains no water when it returns to us, only a few drops cling to it."

Since humanity began to exist, it has not advanced a single step on the road to comprehension of the mystery of life. No question which we seek ourselves on the subject touches, on any side, the sphere in which our intelligence is formed and moves. There is, perhaps, no relation possible or imaginable between the organ that puts the question and the reality that ought to reply to it. The most active and searching enquiries of late years have taught us nothing.

Cogito, ergo sum, said Descartes. 'I think, therefore I am.' He desired a platform, or rather an undeniable proposition, as the foundation of his philosophic thought. His successors have not found it either undeniable or sufficient. They have rejected, too, such alternatives as 'I act, therefore I am,' 'I desire, therefore I am.' Let us suggest still another. No philosophies or religions have so far attempted to deny to us the experience of pain. They relieve us of all else. They have taken from us our personality and our freedom. They have, however, left us our sorrows. Let us take, then, as our foundation the proposition 'I suffer, therefore I am'. And let us add to it the converse and equally true statement, 'I am, therefore I suffer.'

The story of humanity becomes the story of a long procession of sufferers, for whose sufferings no justification is offered, of "poor souls" intellectually and morally confounded, who entered existence blind to any reason for their coming and will leave it blind, who cannot so much as conjecture their origin, or the meaning of their lives, whose elevation above the lower creatures has been their direst misfortune, their ideals being but an accentuation of their sorrows.

Sorrow follows man like his shadow and goes with him along the pathway of life. The existence of a man begins with weakness, which is sorrow: in childhood the reins of duty bring sorrow; in the prime of manhood the ceaseless strife of achieving a living for self and family brings sorrow; in the declining years are sickness, weakness, dependency, suffering and death. Such, O Brethren, said the Buddha, is the round of existence. The stirring of the passions, the lust of hate and envy, the thirst for power, the pride in self in the harvest of years, all these are barren in the winter of old age—in the chill frost of disillusionment. Hear, O Brethren, the

Noble Truth ! That which *is*, abides in sorrow. The tides of time wash the shores of *Samsara* ceaselessly where being is. I proclaim, therefore, the Truth of Infelicity.

See ye these leaves, O Brethren ! This hand which now crushes forth their sweet fragrance was powerless to produce, and is equally powerless to restore the delicate stems and fronds to their original state. Hear the Truth ! As this hand hath crushed these leaves, so shall all things bend to the law of impermanency. All aggregates, all composite things are without permanency, nay, lack a permanent ego. Therefore, insomuch as ye cling to this and to that, seeking to grasp it for its fragrance, ye cling to passing shadow, ye grasp sorrow, for all that ye grasp or cling to is impermanent. As ye sit in the sun, warm though it be, yet is its light obstructed by your bodies, your forms, your materiality. Hear then, O Brethren, the Second Noble Truth, the Truth of the Cause of Infelicity.

The sun sets, O Brethren, far beneath us, yet immeasurably beyond the real ball of the sun lies the city by the lake with its myriad lights, its myriad sounds, its myriad colours, its bulk now veiled in shadow while we here above enjoy the lights. Hear, O Brethren, the Third Noble Truth—The Truth of the Cessation of Infelicity. Bright is the doctrine and clear, nor ceases to shine forth, yet but a little glow touches the city. Here, far removed, the clamour of senses, the lust of wealth, the stench of hypocrisy, do not touch us. In the still waters of reflection can ye see mirrored all the myriad deceits of the city. Thus is the Law exemplified; for as the light shineth in the day, so shall observance of the Precepts lead ye a little at a time upon the Path. Thus, O Brethren, do I proclaim the Third Noble Truth—the Truth of the Cessation of Infelicity.

In the love of Self lies suffering, in the clinging to the thought of a permanent ego lies error. In the grasp of material possession lies insubstantiality. In the aspiration of personal fame lies folly. Cease not, O Brethren, to follow the Precepts, and abide in love of all,—not as ye see them, but as ye know them. In not clinging, not grasping, not aspiring, lies the way to the Cessation of Infelicity. Thus, O Brethren, do I proclaim the Noble Truth—the Path that leads to the Cessation of Infelicity. Verily, it is the Noble Eightfold Path of Right Views, Right Aspiration, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Living, Right Effort, Right Thought and Right Concentration.

Never has a religion set out its case with so complete an appeal to human rational powers and empirical judgment. There is no *misericordia*, no thought of anyone having suffered and died to

provide an escape from this present evil world. In Buddhism, at the foundation, in the Four Noble Truths, there is an appeal to the moral experience of man: (1) The Truth about suffering—we are asked to observe and to generalise to the effect that life and suffering are inseparable; (2) the Truth of the cause of suffering—we are asked to follow a close analysis which shows the root of suffering to lie in craving; (3) the Truth of the cure of suffering—a clear deduction from the diagnosis, this craving must be extinguished; (4) the Truth of the way to effect the cure—an adjustment of means to end, resulting in the Noble Eightfold Path.

The fundamental doctrine of Buddhism is summed up in the Four Noble Truths:

The **FIRST TRUTH**, or the universality of suffering, teaches, in short, that all forms of existence are of necessity subject to suffering.

The **SECOND TRUTH**, or the truth about the origin of suffering, teaches that all suffering or unhappiness of mankind is rooted in *avidya* or ignorance, with its concomitants of greed (*lobha*), hatred (*dosa*), delusion (*moha*), and selfish desire (*tanha*) in its three-fold form of *kāma-tanha* (desire for pleasures of the material world), *bhava-tanha* (clinging to existence), and *vibhava-tanha* (craving for immortality).

The **THIRD TRUTH**, or the truth about the extinction of suffering, shows how, through the liquidation of ignorance and selfish desire, all suffering will vanish.

The **FOURTH TRUTH**, shows the way, or the means, by which this goal is reached.

The Four Truths are the essence of the Doctrine; all else that may be said or written is only a commentary upon them, and it is good to reiterate them in order to fix them in the mind:—

- | | | |
|--|---|-----------|
| 1. Suffering | } | Diagnosis |
| 2. Cause of Suffering | | |
| 3. Cessation of Suffering | | } |
| 4. Way leading to Cessation of Suffering | | |

The Four Noble Truths are the eternal verities that the Buddha discovered whilst meditating beneath the Bo-tree in far off Gaya. There, whilst in *dhyana* (deep meditation), Gautama passed into *Samadhi* or became “in tune with the Infinite,” that is, became one with the Universe and experienced an influx of great understanding—Enlightenment (*Bodhi*). The Buddha’s teaching begins with the fact of His Enlightenment, a spiritual experience which cannot be put into words.

The shackles of the body—its earthly limitations—can be thrown off and man's mind can be attuned to the Infinite. During this period intuitive knowledge, profound inspiration, and a new vision of life are gained. Some call this great experience a psychic phenomenon. But the ancients knew this truth and taught it as *Samādhi*, the merging of man's mind with the Infinite.

It is not a religious doctrine ; it is "cosmic consciousness." It creates a source of great strength and reintegrates man's personal powers. It is the ultimate act of psychic transcendence by which the mind is able to uncover the veil of illusion between us and Reality. Those who develop these powers are not Saviours or Prophets ; they are Guides of humanity who show the way to those who say with Omar Khayyam :

" There was the Door to which I found no Key ;
There was the Veil through which I might not see. "

They are often called mystics. They are content with sensing the mystery. They are people of mystery, who dwell in the regions of the unknown. They do not see visions ; they develop vision. They do not possess second sight—whatever that may be. They possess first sight. They are often spoken of as possessing a higher state of consciousness than their fellows. It would be simpler to say that they are men who have taken the trouble to keep awake, to be fully conscious, and of whom says the *Ariyapariyesena Sutta*:

"Open for ye the Doors to the Transcendental State."

The fourth verity of the Four Noble Truths shows us the way to the "Transcendental State" where exists the "pearl of great price." The path thither lies through the overcoming of ignorance by knowledge, of passion by self-control, of perversity by steadfastness, of hatred by love. In other words : "Let the shell perish that the pearl may appear." What it would be like no words can tell: It is unlike anything experienced in egoistic life, betwixt birth and death, in this illusory existence.

Death throws its shadows over man before he is born, for the stream of life flows most swiftly through the embryo and young foetus, and then inexorably slows down, even within the uterus. Out of the unknown into the womb, in the womb into the image of man, from the image of man to dust. This is the whole history of the one who, during his brief span on earth, says: "I am the monarch of all I survey."

And what that 'monarch,' during his short span from cradle to grave, is heir to, the Buddha in his celebrated first discourse entitled: "Presentation of the Law of the Nature of Things," *Dhammacakka-pavattana Sutta* (literally, Turning of the Wheel of the Law), summed up thus: "Birth is painful, and so is old age ; disease is painful, and so is death. Union with the unpleasant is painful, painful is separation from the pleasant ; and any craving that is unsatisfied, that too is painful. In brief, the *skandhas*, the five aggregates which spring from attachment (the conditions of individuality and its cause), they are painful."

Whilst this is the dower of all those who are born in and are attached to the world, all the while the perfect world exists, a world untroubled by the contraries, where discord, change, disunity are unknown. No Satan revolts, no serpent enters, no conflict disturbs that garden of repose. All quarrels are ended, all clamour is stilled. Sin and pain alike are banished, and

No sound of human sorrow mounts to mar
The serene blissful calm of Nirvana.

NO WORSHIP, PRAYER OR SACRIFICE

The fourth tenet of the Noble Truths teaches us to know the Way which leads to the domain of the "perfect world": the group of thoughts which it covers may be termed the Ethics of Buddhism. "This, O Brethren," so runs this tenet which we have already recited, "is the Noble Truth of the Path to the extinction of suffering, it is this Noble EIGHTFOLD PATH, to wit: RIGHT VIEWS (*Sammā Diṭṭhi*), RIGHT ASPIRATION (*Sammā Saṅkappa*), RIGHT SPEECH (*Sammā Vācā*), RIGHT ACTION (*Sammā Kammanta*), RIGHT LIVING (*Sammā Ājiva*), RIGHT EFFORT (*Sammā Vāyāma*), RIGHT THOUGHT (*Sammā Sati*), and RIGHT CONCENTRATION (*Sammā Samādhi*).

This list of the virtues of the body and the mind would afford little guidance for the individual follower, were it not that its lessons are exemplified in the life of the Buddha, who claimed no divinity for himself, but is the human Leader in the Eightfold Path.

Right Views requires the follower to be equipped with correct knowledge about the world and the significance of life. It is knowledge free from superstition or delusion, and it involves the understanding of the true nature of existence, and the moral laws governing it. No superstitions or delusions should mislead him ; he must follow neither any person nor anything unquestioningly,

but he should satisfy himself, as far as he can judge, that the doctrines he professes and the deeds he performs are good, wise and, therefore, conducive to the happiness not only of himself but also of his fellow-beings.

The Buddha nowhere speaks of any knowledge or any belief which, by itself, intrinsically, means holiness, apart from the action that follows from such knowledge. Therefore, right knowledge is of primary importance to the follower. What we do reflects what we think. Wrong acts issue from wrong beliefs. To remove wrong views, Right Knowledge is necessary. In Buddhist psychology Will and Intelligence go together.

Here is the basic Law of Mind:

As you See—so you Feel
As you Feel—so you Think
As you Think—so you Will
As you Will—so you Act.

Right Aspiration is right aims; high, and worthy of intelligent and earnest men, it is one's determination to be always in a pure state of mind, free from sensual lust, from ill-will and from cruelty. Aspirations must be turned to activities. They must find expression in Right Speech, Right Action, and Right Living.

Right Speech is the utterance of truthful words; kindly words, open words, pacifying words and wise words: "To abstain from falsehood, to abstain from back-biting, to abstain from harsh language, and to abstain from frivolous talk is called Right Speech."

Right Action is unselfish action, purity of motive and humility in life, conduct peaceful, honest and pure, free from harming living creatures, not appropriating to himself that which is not willingly given by its owner, and free from unlawful sexual intercourse. It is living for the good and benefit of all beings.

Right Living is the abandonment of wrong occupations and the obtaining of one's livelihood only by right methods, such a livelihood as does not bring hurt, danger, harm or suffering to other beings.

Right Effort is the practice of self-training in control of the passions so as to prevent the rise of bad qualities, and the suppression of evil states that have arisen. It consists not merely in the suppression of evil but also in making all good things in one to grow, acquiring new goodness, fostering and increasing it. Without Right Effort there can be no enlightenment. Through it alone can we destroy anger, envy, pride and attachment to objects.

Right Thought is alertness of mind. It is the ever-ready mental clearness in whatever we are doing, speaking or thinking, and keeping before our mind the realities of existence. Mental culture is not so much a suppression of the senses as a cultivation of them to see the Truth.

Right Concentration is deep meditation (*dhyāna*) on the realities of life with its result of tranquillity or *samādhi*. *Dhyāna* is highest contemplation, and takes the place of prayer in Buddhism. It is the steady endeavour to bring the mind into harmony with all that *is*. It is a deliberate effort to eliminate egotism and be lost in the Truth.

The foregoing is an outline of the practical way which the follower has to go. But it is only an outline. In these eight "Rights" is locked up the quintessence of Buddha's teaching. To each of these "Rights"—in Buddhism, one does Right for Right's sake and not from any consideration of reward or punishment, or enjoyment of the fruit of action—is attached an explanatory reason, telling us why, in each case, happiness is obtained by doing so or being so.

The ideas here placed before us gather significance and colour from the many *Suttas* (discourses) of the Buddha in which His Way of Life leading to happiness is described. In the *Digha-Nikaya*, Sutta 22, and other *Suttas* are comprehensive and extensive definitions as to how this strange happiness actually did work as long as we kept to the Path, and how happiness was lost as soon as we strayed from it.

The Eightfold Path is a code of morality for the wayfarer, which has for its object the promotion of: Wisdom or *Pañña* (Right Knowledge, Right Aspiration); Righteousness or *Sila* (Right Speech, Right Action, Right Living); and Mental training or *Samadhi* (Right Effort, Right Thought, Right Concentration). Hence the Eightfold Path is a planned course of inward culture, of inward progress. By merely external worship, mere ceremonies and selfish prayers, one never can make any real progress in righteousness and insight. To pray for happiness, says the Buddha, is as futile as to ask the further bank of a river to come over that one may get to the other side. There is nothing in the Path that can be called worship or prayer.

In Buddhism there is no God-creator whom Buddhists should obey and fear. Buddhism teaches that man can gain his deliverance by his own exertions, without depending on a God or mediating priests. As T. H. Huxley states: "Buddhism is a system which

knows no God in the Western sense, which denies the soul to man, which counts the belief in immortality a blunder, which refuses any efficacy to prayer and sacrifice, which bids men to look to nothing but their own efforts for salvation."

Though such external forms of homage as the offering of flowers and the like are prevalent amongst Buddhists, the Buddha is not worshipped as a God. The Buddhists go to temples not to worship but to pay homage to the One who showed mankind the Path of Happiness; they go there in the same spirit as that with which thousands of Russians visit daily Lenin's mausoleum in the Red Square, and bow in reverence before the embalmed body of their emancipator. The flowers that are laid at the foot of the Master's images and memorial shrines in which repose His corporeal relics, raised in all kinds of places in simple homage, are no more sacrifices than those which are laid on our warriors' graves or in remembrance of our beloved ones.

When the Buddhist raises his palmed hands to his forehead and says: *Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammā-Sambuddhassa* "Honour to Him, the Master, the Exalted, the Buddha Supreme," he is uttering no "hymn of praise," nor is he performing any cult or worship. It is no more and no less than a mere act of reverent salutation, the supreme in Aryan tradition.

And when the Buddhist recites the *Tri-Sarana*, the Threefold Refuge: "I put my trust in the Buddha; I put my trust in the Doctrine; I put my trust in the Order," the symbol of entrance into the Faith and becoming a follower, it is not the recital of a creed but the performance of an act. Buddhism is not a religion of devotion, but one of action. "Warriors! warriors we call ourselves! We fight for noble virtue, for lofty effort, for sublime wisdom. For this reason we call ourselves warriors!" (*Anguttara Nikaya*).

There is no worship or sacrifice in Buddhism. The last words of the Buddha to his favourite disciple Ananda, when he made his usual offerings of flowers to the Master, were: "Now it is not thus, Ananda, that the Tathagata is rightly honoured, revered, venerated, held sacred or revered. But the brother or the sister, the devout man or the devout woman, who is correct in life, walking according to the Precepts—it is he who rightly honours, reverences, venerates, holds sacred and reveres the Tathagata with the worthiest homage."

The Buddhists believe in Karma, in the consequence of actions, in the adjustment of the scales according to deeds, As we think

and act, so we become; "as you sow, so shall ye reap." Evil cannot by its nature produce anything but further evil. The Buddha set forth the process by which the causal law operates, and he invited all to test its truth. It is in the practical application of the "Ancient Law" of the *Dhammapada*, that there is a cosmic justice behind the phenomena of the universe, that the principle of sacrifice becomes apparent.

All through the religious thought of the ages this principle of sacrifice can be traced. In the Vedas, as in Judaism and the rites of ancient Greece, it was sacrifice to propitiate gods; in Christianity it took the form of vicarious atonement, still with the same underlying motive. From the primitive cults it took an aspect that has given rise to a persistent misunderstanding of its true meaning. The victim of the sacrifice became the "scapegoat" of the Hebrews, and the god-victim of the Aztecs—one who atoned for the misdeeds of others and acted as intercessor between them and the outraged gods.

In Frazer's *Golden Bough*—that inexhaustible source-book of human custom and superstition—there is a striking description of a tribal scapegoat being scourged with thorns to atone for the sins of his people. The motive behind this primitive ritual was to unload upon a single individual the guilt of the whole race and to expiate in his blood the crimes of everyone else.

The idea is probably a perversion of a truth that was better understood by those who originally taught it. Man, shrinking from the truth that the real sacrifice is that of self, and that it is one that each must make in his own person, sought to evade it in the sacrifice of substitutes, in crude animal-slaughter, or the terrifying pomp of ritual murder. In that way his anxieties were appeased; he went about his affairs, comforted in the belief that he had paid in full and appeased the anger of his deities.

It was the Buddha who re-asserted the truth of sacrifice in its stark purity. Each must lay his ego upon the sacrificial altar before he could obtain the vision. If need be, each must lay down his life, refusing to exchange blow for blow, but meeting hatred with love.

Once, Kūṭadanta, the head of the Brahmins in the village of Dānamati, having approached the Buddha, respectfully greeted Him and said: "I am told that Thou teachest the Law, yet Thou tearest down religion. Thy disciples despise rites and abandon immolation, but reverence for the gods can be shown only by

sacrifices. The very nature of religion consists in worship and sacrifice."

The Buddha answered: "Greater than the immolation of bullocks is the sacrifice of self. He who offers to the gods his sinful desires will see the uselessness of slaughtering animals at the altar. Blood has no cleansing power, but the eradication of lust will make the heart pure. Better than worshipping gods is obedience to the laws of righteousness." (*Kutadanta Sutta*).

The Buddhist doctrine is that the only true sacrifice is the sacrifice of self. Without any outside help, without the aid of any authority, every man must evolve his own character: he must follow with fortitude the "Middle Path," that narrow "Way" which avoids on the one side the degrading self-indulgence of the sensualist, and on the other the silly austerities of the ascetic. All the sorrow and suffering in life comes from selfishness. The thirst (*tanha*) for sensuous enjoyment at the expense of others produces that feeling of separation which exists between man and man. Quench this thirst, keep the self in complete subjection, and all will be well.

THE IDEAL OF ARAHATSHIP

The Buddhist way of life, as exemplified by the Master, does not stress the acquisition of material possessions, the aspiration for personal fame and power, nor the clinging to the thought of a permanent ego, nor a blind conformity to existing social institutions and practices.

Its own distinctive character lies in a devotion to the attitude of brotherly love extended to all men. One imbued with this attitude seeks to subordinate the ego's grasping to become pure in mind and heart and humble in spirit, and, so altered, to turn to others with sympathetic love.

The Buddhist is to stand as a person before persons; men are to be his fellow men and not means to purposes of domination or exploitation. Inter-personal relations are to be suffused with Benevolence, Righteousness and Compassion.

The emphasis on this Path is on a quality of personal life and on a social order which puts supreme emphasis upon personality. It has a place for meditation, for the pruning of excessive desires, for worshipful silence, for concern for others. In a host of ways this attitude is now entering into the spirit of modern man, and they do not oppose it in words even when they negate it in practice. It crops up in aspirations of peace and brotherhood, in the demand

for equality of opportunity, in an uneasy conscience before injunctions to kill and hate, in help to the broken and unfortunate, in a vague but persistent idealism. It tempers and embarrasses our complacency and our greed. At its best it functions as a challenge to the trivialising and de-personalising of human relations which the modern tendencies encourage as well as promote.

The great trouble with humanity is its absorption in the lower self and its manifestations, and this is where Buddhism shows us a better way. Even our limited experience proves to us that no permanent happiness is to be found in earthly pleasures, for everything of the earth is impermanent. Buddhism, with its ethical code, its Eightfold Path, gives us an ideal of conduct which is unsurpassed in any religion man has known. In its teaching of the law of cause and effect, in its stress upon the unity of all life and the relative unimportance of the personal self, it emancipates the ego from the enthrallment of the lower nature and its striving for self, it shows us the perfected man in the person of the Arahāt, and holds out to all human beings the glory of achievement. It teaches that self-mastery is absolutely essential to a fuller life. The glorification of the lower ego and the pursuit of pleasures lead only to suffering, because the very nature of the physical world is transitory. Everything that has a beginning has an end, and sorrow, disillusionment and pain are concomitants of existence. For this reason the Buddha taught men to subdue their lower desires and to strive for spiritual wisdom.

Buddhism is commonly classified as pessimism. This is true in so far as the Buddhist recognizes the existence of suffering, but it is not true if, by pessimism, it is understood that he tamely succumbs to it and remains quiescent. "The true Buddhist", says Professor Oldenberg, "sees in this world a state of continuous sorrow, but this sorrow only awakes in him a feeling of compassion for those who are yet attached to the world; for himself, he feels no sorrow nor compassion, for he knows he is near his goal which stands awaiting him, noble beyond all else." The Buddhist, certainly, does not consider existence a boon.

Existence has been misnamed a boon. It is a jest carried too far. The diamond is paste. And what need to summon witnesses for this certain and central truth? It is broad-based on universal experience. It is buttressed by reason. Its force has been admitted by philosophers as well as poets, by simple souls as well as by the Enlightened. It reverberates through the thoughts of men in

all regions and ages. It finds an echo in every human heart. "One can go on living," as said Tolstoy, "when one is intoxicated by life; as soon as one is sober, it is impossible not to see that it is all a mere fraud."

The Buddha insists, not on abolition of the will-to-live or a turning away from the world, but on a hot contest with craving, an active wrestling with evil. "If the critic would dwell more on the positive tendencies in Buddhist ethics," says Mrs. Rhys Davids, "he might discern, under the outward calm of mien of the Buddhist sage, in literature and art, a passion of emotion and will not paralysed or expurgated, but rendered subservient to and diffused around deep faith and high hope. For there is no doctrine, not even excepting Platonism, that sees in life, in the life that now is, greater possibilities of perfection. Nor is there any system, not excepting that of the Christian, which sees in the evolution of human love a more exalted transcendence of the lower forms of that emotion."

The Buddha's aim is intensely practical. He desires His followers to follow His Path and see for themselves. He proclaims that if we exert and control our thoughts, purify our hearts and remould our desires, there will shine out on us the gold-like splendour of virtue; the perfect goodness, the eternal righteousness will be established in the stainless shrine. The vision is for him who will see it, for, as the Buddha says in His first discourse at Benares: "If ye walk according to My teaching, ye shall, even in this present life, be partakers, in a short time, of that supreme happiness, the highest aspiration of religious effort." It is not a pessimist who speaks here with such conviction and authority.

The good tidings of the Buddha are not so much the recognition of the existence of pain and care as the conquest of evil and the escape from suffering. The following verses from the *Dhammapada* have no pessimistic ring:

Let us live happily then,
Free from covetousness among the covetous.
Among men who are greedy,
Let us dwell free from greed.

Let us live happily then,
Free from malice among the malicious;
Among men who bear us hate,
Let us dwell free from hatred.

Let us live happily then,
 Free from attachments among the attached ;
 Among men who yearn for sensuous pleasures,
 Let us dwell free from sensuous pleasures

The Buddhist Nirvana, accordingly, can only be conceived as a negative condition by those who are still entangled in the illusion of self. The Christians are shocked at the nihilism of the Buddhist whose highest aspiration is the attainment of Nirvana through the extinction of 'self' or what the Christians call the 'soul,' but they take no offence when St. Paul says: "I am crucified with Christ, yet *not* I but Christ liveth in me."

"Only through ignorance and delusion do men indulge in the dream that their souls are separate and self-existing entities," declared the Buddha addressing the Brahmin Kūtadanta. "Thy heart, O Brahmin," He said, "is cleaving still to self ; thou art anxious about heaven, thou seekest the pleasures of self in heaven, and thus thou canst not see the bliss of righteousness and the immortality of truth."

"Verily I say unto you: The Tathagatha has not come to teach death, but to teach life, and thou dost not discern the nature of living and dying."

"This body will be dissolved and no amount of sacrifice will save it. Therefore, seek thou the life that is righteous. Where self is, truth cannot be ; yet when truth comes, self will disappear. Therefore, let thy mind rest in the truth ; practise the truth, put thy whole will in it, and propagate it. In the truth thou shall live forever."

"Self is death and truth is life. The cleaving to self is a perpetual dying, while moving in the truth is partaking of Nirvana, which is life transcendent."

Kūtadanta asked: "Where, O Venerable Master, is Nirvana ?"

"Nirvana is wherever the Precepts are observed," replied the Buddha. (*Kutadanta Sutta*).

Before we can become free from unhappiness, we must understand the cause of all sufferings ; before we can rise to higher and better things, we must discover what it is that chains us down. The cause of all misery is lack of knowledge of the truth. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free," said Jesus. When we know the truth, we become free, for truth is all-powerful and brings liberty and freedom to all who enter into it.

Were truth and morality negative, Nirvana would be negative also ; as they are positive, Nirvana is positive. The personality of every man continues in what the Buddhists call his Karma, and he who attains enlightenment becomes thereby identical with truth itself, which is everlasting and omnipresent, pervading not only this world system, but all other worlds that are to be in the future. For truth is the same today as it will be tomorrow. The more our mind rids itself of selfishness and partakes of the truth, the higher shall we rise into the domain where all tribulations and anxieties have disappeared, for there attachment is blotted out and self conquered. " Learning is a good thing ; but it availeth not." said the Buddha. " True wisdom can be acquired by experience only. Practise the truth that thy brother is the same as thou. Walk in the noble path of righteousness and thou wilt understand that, while there is death in self, there is immortality in truth." (*Kûṭadanta Sutta*).

The Buddha sought to lead men by a well-defined pathway to a goal, which, in this life, at any rate, might well be called salvation ; and the term Nirvana was sometimes, though not always, used as a definition of that goal. But just as the term "salvation" is indefinite to the Christian until he knows what it is he is to be "saved" from, so does the term Nirvana remain obscure until we know what it is that is "extinguished" in man. And salvation here is precisely the being delivered from delusions with regard to individuality, with all it implies, greed, hatred, lust, in which the ordinary unconverted man is still entangled. When the mind has become clear from these delusions, a new and wider, brighter world reveals itself to the mind of him who has "entered upon the Path."

Those who attain Nirvana get rid of their individuality and reach the light of a new spiritual day. They are liberated even while alive. The calm serenity and peace with which they face the sufferings and hardships of life, the felt conquest of fear and abounding love for all that is alive are the prominent features of their lives. They see all things temporal with purged eyes. They feel themselves to be at one with universal life. Nirvana is a state attainable in this life and is quite compatible with moral and intellectual exertion.

To acquire, as an habitual frame of mind, the eight positive characteristics laid down in the Noble Eightfold Path, to get rid of the ten failings specified in the list of Fetters (*Samyojanas*), constitutes Arahatsip, the Buddhist ideal of life.

The first of these Fetters is the delusion of a personal self (*sakkāya-ditthi*), the mother of all egoism. The second obstacle is called scepticism (*vicikicchā*). It is a cloak for idleness or vice. The third Fetter is the fetter of *silabbata-parāmāsa* or superstition, the belief in a Supreme Being or in gods, and in the efficacy of purificatory rites and ceremonies. It is essential that the man, who enters on a system of ethical training, not based on a supernatural revelation, should begin by clearing away the rubbish of false beliefs, of sham supports which really afford no aid. Ritual does not help us to free ourselves from lust, hatred and ignorance. He who is released from the delusion of the ego, from doubt of the Buddha and His doctrine, and from belief in gods and ceremonial rites, is said to have entered the first stage in the Noble Path. He is called the *Sotapanno*, or he who has entered upon the stream. About this state the *Dhammapada* says: "Better than sovereignty over the earth, better than going to heaven, better than lordship over all worlds, is the reward of the first step in holiness."

The two next obstacles to be overcome are sensuality (*kāma*), and resentment (*paṭigha*). When these are mastered he attains the second stage of the Noble Path, he is *Sakadagamin*, or he who will be re-born once more only. When these two impediments are completely conquered and the *Sotapanno* arrives at the end of the third stage, he becomes *Anāgāmin*. Though he is not free from all error, there is no more possibility of falling backward.

The path leading immediately to Arahatship is occupied with sundering the last five of these Fetters, which may be taken together. They are: (6) *rūparāga*, the love of life on earth, literally, in the worlds of form; (7) *arūparāga*, desire for a future life in heaven, literally, in the formless worlds; (8) *mana*, which is pride; (9) *uddhacca*, or self-righteousness, and (10) *avijja* or *avidya*, ignorance of the true nature of things.

When these Fetters are burst he reaches the goal, becomes an Arahāt and attains the blessedness of Nirvana. "Arahāt" is a common word used in pre-Buddhistic times for anyone who attains the ideal of his religion. The Arahāt condition, in Buddhism, is a state of blissful sanctification. It is identical with the beatific vision of the Christian saints. Nirvana is the goal of Buddhism, and Arahatship terminates in it. The Arahāt is still a man. It is when he dies that he ceases to exist, and escapes from the wheel of life.

Buddhism holds that final extinction of ignorance or *avidya*, is the way of escape from the wheel of life, but the escape is not

reached, and, of course, in the Buddhist system, could not be reached, in a union with Brahma or God which is to be attained only in an after-life. The victory to be gained by the liquidation of ignorance is, in the Buddha's view, a victory which can be gained and enjoyed in this life, and in this life only. This is what is meant by the Buddhist ideal of Arahatsip—the life of a man made perfect by insight, the life of a man who has travelled along the Noble Eightfold Path and broken all the Fetters, and carried out, in its entirety, the Buddhist system of self-culture and self-control. The Christian analogue to the state of mind of one who has become an Arahats and attained Nirvana, is the advent of the Kingdom of Heaven within a man, the “peace that passeth understanding.”

This transcendent life, the Buddha maintains, can be normally obtained before the bodily death of man, and He equates it to happiness of the highest order, accompanied too by the consciousness of the destruction of individualistic desire or selfhood. In this transcendental absolute entity, man loses consciousness of his separate self and dissolves into the Nirvanic state. When all thought of self is annihilated, man becomes the very embodiment of the Ten Perfections or *Paramitas* of Liberality (*dana*), Morality (*sīla*), Renunciation (*nekkhamma*), Wisdom (*paññā*), Energy (*virīya*), Forgiveness (*khanti*), Truthfulness (*sacca*), Resolution (*adhiṭṭhāna*), Love (*mettā*), and Equanimity (*upekkhā*).

The Buddhist poems reach their highest level of beauty when they attempt to describe the glory of this state of victory over the world, the transition from an egoistic life to one of self-forgetfulness, of an inward peace than can never be shaken, of a joy that can never be ruffled. One might fill pages with the awe-struck and ecstatic praise lavished in the writings of the early Buddhists, men or women, who had reached this state, and upon the glorious bliss and peace of the mental condition it involves. They had endless love names for it, each based on one of the phases of the many-sided whole. It is Emancipation, the Island of Refuge, the End of Craving, the State of Purity, the Supreme, the Transcendent, the Tranquil, the Unchanging, the Going-out, the Unshaken, the Imperishable, the Ambrosia, and so on, in almost endless variety. One of the epithets is more familiar. This is Nirvana, “the Going-out”; that is to say, the going-out, in the heart, of the three fires of greed, hatred and delusion.

Greed, hatred, and delusion are called “the three fires,” the extinction of which is the state of the Arahats, the man who has

attained Nirvana. As the literal meaning of the word Nirvana is "going-out" or "extinction," it has caused some to suppose that the word is synonymous with "annihilation." But Nirvana really means the higher life of the man who has risen above himself. It means the extinction of the illusion of self, and the consequent annihilation of selfishness. It is the state of complete enlightenment, of perfect goodness, and of perfect peace. The Buddha compares it to a "city of peace," and to "AN ISLAND WHICH NO FLOOD CAN OVERWHELM."

When Kassapa, a distinguished Brahmin teacher, had left to join the new Leader, and the people were astonished at it, he is asked, in the presence of the multitude, to explain the nature of the change that has come over him :

"What hast thou seen, O thou of Uruvelā,
That thou, for penances so far renowned,
Forsakest thus thy sacrificial fire ?
I ask thee, Kassapa, the meaning of this thing.
How comes it that thine altar lies deserted ?
What is it, in the world of men or gods,
That thy heart longs for ? Tell me that, Kassapa !"

And the convert answers :

"That state of peace I saw, wherein the root
Of all sorrow and ill is destroyed, and greed
And hatred and delusion all have ceased,
That state from lust for eternal life set free,
That changeth not, can ne'er be led to change,
My mind saw that ! What care I for those rites" ?

—*Maha-Vagga*

So we sum up our brief exposition of the Eightfold Path by saying that, for the man who walks in it, the world and the self vanish away. The self and its connections with the world do not cease until a man escapes from *avidya* (ignorance). This veil being pierced, a vision of the true nature of things is revealed, and the bonds which bind us to selfhood are loosened, and man dives deep into the Infinite, the Deathless, the Eternal. This is the Nirvanic state, the state of harmony with the Deathless (*Amata*) ; the finite mind,

as many have truly said, altogether fails to reach this state—it must lose its finiteness first—and no language can adequately give expression to it. Perhaps we may be bold enough to say that the attainment of Nirvana is to pass from *Existence* into *Being*, so that from a state of separateness one attains a state of unity, from being a part to becoming the whole !

Chapter IV

THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

ALL the great religions—with the exception of Buddhism and Confucianism—are based on belief in a supernatural power, controlling the universe. Religion thus becomes a matter of getting into right relations with the controlling power by sacrifices, prayers, ceremonies, declarations of allegiance, and the observance of certain “thou shalts” or “thou shalt nots”. The thoughts, feelings, and actions of the believer are—in theory at least—governed by his conception of the will and purpose of the supernatural arbiter of his destiny.

Not the least of the benefits of the Buddha’s teaching is that it clears up, or clears away, the “religious difficulties” that beset the believer in a Supreme Arbiter. Take, for example, the problem of evil. For centuries Christians have been trying to reconcile their belief in an all-loving, all-powerful God with the existence of the crimes and immoralities and sufferings that afflict mankind. All sorts of solutions have been offered, but the Christians are still haunted by the riddle of a Deity who creates and permits evils that his creatures are doing all they can to abolish. From the Buddhist point of view, however, there is no riddle at all. The sources of evil are found, not in the inscrutable purposes of a good God, or in the machinations of a devil, but simply in the history of man himself. Man has evolved through millions of years, from a simple to an extremely complex organism, and in climbing the ladder of evolution, his animal ancestors developed certain instincts and habits necessary to their survival.

Man, who stands at the top of the ladder, has inherited these same instincts ; he is an animal, distinguished from other animals chiefly by the higher development of his brain, which has enabled him to invent and use tools, to express his thoughts in language, to investigate, and to reason. Thanks to these mental powers, man was able to pass, by slow degrees, from the loose groups which formed his first attempts at social life to more and more complex organisations. And at every stage from the wandering tribes of man-apes up to the peaks of civilization, we can see the struggle to adapt the old bred-in-the-bone instincts to new ways of life.

We have to face the fact that we are the descendants of ape-like ancestors. The truth, at first sight, is often ugly and repulsive

to our personal feelings, but when it *is* the truth, its ultimate effects on us are always salutary. The sooner men realize their humble origin, the better it will be for their happiness. Perhaps they will then understand the true nature of those faults of the flesh known to good churchmen as "original sin." The theological mind accounts for the presence of vicious traits in our nature by a childish myth attributed to a hypothetical garden. Prof. C. E. M. Joad, a recent 'convert' from agnosticism to Anglicanism, has expressed his attitude to the problem of evil in these terms: "I see now that evil is endemic in man, and that the Christian doctrine of original sin expresses a deep and essential insight into human nature."

In his agnostic days Joad used to be fond of saying: "When the mind becomes old and begins to decay, it becomes matted with God-webs." Joad's own mind grew God-webby as World War II grew more terrible. He began to doubt whether evil was something that could be cured by moral and mental discipline, socialism, progressive schools and psycho-analysis. He now says with a grin: "In that view, a world of adequately psycho-analysed Communists would be the millennium."

The Christian accounts for man's inborn tendency to sin by tracing his descent from Adam; the Buddhist regards "original sin" as man's inheritance from the jungle. Evolution thus gives us the key to the mystery of evil, which appears as a mystery only because men who were ignorant of the natural explanation tried to produce a supernatural one. To the Buddhist the question of evil is not a religious puzzle, but a scientific problem, to be studied and solved in the light of experience and reason. A similar change is made in the cognate subject of morality. The Buddhist does not believe in any supernatural moral law, or in a God-implanted conscience that enables him to distinguish infallibly between right and wrong conduct.

According to Christian belief, the moral law was derived from the authoritative announcements of the Deity, confirmed by the voice of a divinely-implanted conscience. Now, however, the purely human source of these announcements has been proved, and conscience itself explained as a product of evolution, varying with time and place, in a way impossible to an instinct rooted in the divine.

From the Buddhist point of view, the moral law is regarded simply as the embodiment or the expression of the experience and traditions of society.

Animal societies have their moral codes, in which fidelity, courage, mutual assistance, parental love, faithfulness in sex relations, self-sacrifice, and many other high ethical qualities are revealed. The fact that the possession of one or more of these qualities has aided them to survive in the struggle for existence shows how morality, in the broad sense, may be explained as a product of natural evolution.

Both in human and lower animal societies, certain lines of conduct tend to the welfare of the community, with the result that those communities exhibiting these beneficial qualities in the highest degree become the most firmly established. Conversely, anti-social behaviour reacts on the community, with a more or less destructive result.

On this simple basis of cause and effect one can explain the slow development, not only of highly-organised animal societies, but also of the civilized human race. At each point in the progress from the family or tribe to nations of increasing size and increasing complexity, in the nature of their contents and their mutual relations, the code of conduct accepted or enforced was a reflection of the condition of society.

Morality is based on the results of many centuries and millennia of social experience and has its roots in human character. As for the belief in heaven and hell, it is not only not necessary as a basis for morality; it absolutely undermines morality. A good act done for the sake of a material personal reward or under the terror of personal chastisement loses its value as a good act.

The whole supposition that a system of violent and intense rewards and punishments is necessary to induce human beings to perform acts for the good of others is based on a false psychology which starts from the individual isolated man, instead of man the social animal. Man is an integral member of his group. Among his natural instincts there are those which aim at group preservation as well as self-preservation.

And man has, to be sure, no monopoly in the virtues. The lower animals can be brave just as they can be—toward their offspring at any rate—self-sacrificingly loyal. Indeed, even the insects are said to exhibit a disinterested concern for the welfare of their community and to be capable of something to which the pragmatist at least can hardly refuse to give the name of patriotism.

There is a self-immolating hero streak in dogdom which is found in no other mammal except man. Man has the precepts and the

shining examples of the ages to urge him toward heroism, and also a hope of reward or glory. The dog has none of these to impel him to stake his life for others. Yet more than once his instinctive heroism has made a dog sacrifice his life for the sake of his human gods.

A fox terrier awakened her master and his family one night by shaking them and growling in their ears when a fire assailed their home. Not until firemen had carried the last of the three children safely to the street did she turn back into the blaze to rescue her own new-born puppies.

A cow, a tigress or a hen does not need a promise of future rewards to induce her to risk her life to save her young from harm. The male leopard or gorilla needs no reward to fight devotedly for his females and off-spring. They all instinctively do so. And it would be a mistake to imagine that this devotion only shows itself in the form of fighting, or only in dangerous crises. It is part of the daily life of any natural group or herd, the strong members help the weak, the weak run for protection to the strong. In man, even in his primitive state, these instincts are much more highly developed than in the other gregarious animals; with the process of civilization they increase in range, in reasonableness, in sublimity.

And so, in the realm of the lower animals, no conflict arises. The virtues appropriate to each creature's way of life are as truly instinctive as the impulses which lead it to defend its individual, or family, existence or to gratify the most elementary of its appetites. Its golden mean—that balance of tendencies which serves to make it just what a tiger or a rabbit or an ant ought to be in order to lead exactly the life characteristic of its kind—is established for it. But though the problem is at least as old as the Buddha, no one has yet been able to define a good man in the sense in which it is possible to define a good horse, or a good pig, or a good bee.

If we put down in column form an abbreviated list of "original sins," we will find that in human nature there is an opposite virtue—inborn desires or predispositions which produce a contrary result. Against hate we must place love; against egoism, altruism; against cruelty, kindness; against pugnacity, pacifism; against lust, purity; against anger, goodwill; against revenge, forgiveness. It is the duality of our mental "make-up" which has led to the diversity of opinion regarding man's nature. Man, it is asserted, is "peaceful"; he has also been described as essentially militant. Both statements are true; our verdict depends on which side of the

mental coin is uppermost to our view ; the man who is a pacifist at one moment may be a killer the next. A man one day devoted to a friend and a wife might quite possibly the next day murder both his friend and his wife, if he finds them compromising his honour. The problem which faces us is this ; how can the apparent duality of human nature be explained ? The Buddhist can offer an explanation which is agreeable to reason: the Christian theologian has to appeal to superstition for an answer.

It is only when we realize the conditions under which the later stages of the evolution of man were carried out that we come by a clue to the duality of his mental nature. Conceive, for a moment, what those conditions were. During all the final stages of our evolution, mankind throughout the whole earth was segregated into small local communities or tribes. Until the introduction of civilization as we know it, some 7,000 to 10,000 years ago man lived throughout the world in small isolated communities or tribes. This was certainly so during the entire Pleistocene period, which endured for over half a million years. Tribalism was rampant everywhere down to the beginnings of the fifth millennium B.C., when somewhere in South-West Asia agriculture was discovered, town-building and detribalization set in, and the era of civilization began.

A tribe to endure had to comply with two conditions—(1) it had to remain intact as a group and serve its well-being ; (2) it had to protect itself from all other aggressive and marauding tribes. Human nature was fashioned or evolved just to endure these two conditions—the social welfare of the community, and the protection of the community from anti-social neighbours. Hence the duality of man's nature—the good, social, or virtuous traits serving his own, and his tribe's economy ; the evil, vicious, or anti-social qualities serving his relations with his neighbours. A good tribesman clings to his fellows and tells them the truth ; he repels men of neighbouring tribes and tells them lies.

Herbert Spencer found that evolution, as seen at work in human communities, speaks with two voices, each voice enunciating a separate code. One he named the code of *Amity* ; the other he called the code of *Enmity*. In his *Principles of Ethics* Spencer gives an account of his "fundamental discovery" in ethics—the dual code of human conduct.

"Rude tribes and civilized societies have had continually to carry on an external self-defence and internal co-operation ; external

antagonism and internal friendship. Hence their members have acquired two different sets of sentiments and ideas, adjusted to these two kinds of activity.

“A life of constant external enmity generates a code in which aggression, conquest, and revenge are inculcated, while peaceful occupations are reprobated. Conversely a life of settled internal amity generates a code inculcating the virtues conducing to a harmonious co-operation—justice, honesty, veracity, regard for each other's claims.

“As the ethics of enmity and the ethics of amity which arise in connection with external and internal conditions respectively have to be simultaneously entertained, there is formed an assemblage of utterly inconsistent sentiments and ideas.

“There thus come to be two classes of duties and virtues, condemned and approved in similar ways, but one of which (code of Amity) is associated with ethical conceptions, and the other (code of Enmity) not. To speak of the ethics of enmity seems absurd.”

It is only when we realize that men are dominated by these two codes—the Amity Code, and the Enmity Code, according to Spencer—that we can find an adequate explanation for their actions. The Buddha was one of the first, if not the very first, to discover this dual code in human conduct and His teaching is mainly directed to transform these two antagonistic and irreconcilable codes into one single ethical code. The moral and mental discipline He preached is designed to achieve this goal.

In the Noble Eightfold Path the Buddha expounds His system of ethics. He taught a single ethical code, one in which love and brotherliness are made dominant in thought, word, and deed, and from which hate and selfishness in their every mood and tense must be resolutely excluded. The Eightfold Path teaches men how to behave, if they would live at peace with each other.

In the *Dhammapada* the Buddha exhorts men to submerge the “Enmity Code” and regulate their life by the “Amity Code.” Enmities are to be overcome by acts of love; offences by forgiveness. One must allow no thoughts of hatred, anger and revenge to enter the mind; one must not requite evil with evil, but must overcome evil with good:

“He who holds back rising anger like a rolling chariot, him I call a charioteer; other folk are but holding the reins.”

“Let a man overcome anger by love; let him overcome evil by good; let him overcome the greedy by liberality, the liar by truth.”

“Speak not harshly to anyone ; those who are spoken to will answer thee in the same way. Painful indeed is language violent ; blows for blows will pursue thee.”

“A man is not learned because he talks much ; he who is patient, free from hatred and fear, he is called learned.”

“All men tremble at punishment, unto all men life is dear ; do as you would be done by, kill not nor cause to kill.”

“He who, by causing pain to others, wishes to obtain happiness for himself, he, entangled in the bonds of hatred, will never be happy.”

“Beware of misdeeds of the mind, and control thy mind ; Renounce the sins of the mind, and practise virtue with thy mind.”

“Beware of misdeeds of the tongue, and control thy tongue ; Renounce the sins of the tongue, and practise virtues with thy tongue.”

“Beware of bodily misdeeds, and control thy body ; Renounce the sins of the body, and with thy body practise virtue.”

To the Buddhist, moral law is a natural growth ; men, finding certain kinds of conduct to be beneficial to the community and certain others harmful, established customs and taboos accordingly. The practice of enforcing these moral laws by claiming supernatural authority for them is, to the Buddhist, both illusory and unnecessary. He judges conduct, not by an arbitrary standard expressed in a commandment alleged to be pronounced by God, but simply by its effect on the well-being of the individual and of society.

The practical directions given by the Buddha for this well-being are the avoiding of the Ten Evils. The Buddha said : “All acts of living creatures become bad by ten things, and by avoiding the ten defections they become good. There are three evils of the body, four evils of the tongue, and three evils of the mind. The evils of the body are, murder, theft, and adultery ; of the tongue, lying, slander, abuse, and idle talk ; of the mind, covetousness, hatred, and error.

“I teach you to avoid the Ten Evils: (1) Kill not, but have regard for life. (2) Steal not, neither do ye rob ; but help everybody to be master of the fruits of his labour. (3) Abstain from impurity, and lead a life of chastity. (4) Lie not, but be truthful. Speak the truth with discretion, fearlessly and in a loving heart. (5) Invent not evil reports, neither do ye repeat them. Carp not, but look for

the good sides of your fellow-beings, so that you may with sincerity defend them against their enemies. (6) Swear not, but speak decently and with dignity. (7) Waste not the time with gossip, but speak to the purpose or keep silence. (8) Covet not, nor envy, but rejoice at the good fortune of other people. (9) Cleanse your heart of malice and cherish no hatred, not even against your enemies ; but embrace all living beings with kindness. (10) Free your mind of ignorance and be anxious to learn the truth, especially in the one thing that is needed, lest you fall a prey either to scepticism or to errors. Scepticism will make you indifferent and errors will lead you astray so that you shall not find the noble path that leads to peace of mind."

These ten fundamental precepts form only the backbone of a very penetrative system of morality set for the Buddhist. It comprises all that was considered lawful, honourable and obligatory in the social relations of life at the time of the Buddha. The primary demand made upon the follower is: "If thou shalt live in this world, make this world a something which is worthy of life."

The whole of history shows how man learned, by slow and painful degrees in the school of experience, what modes of conduct were most beneficial in private, social, national, and international life. The lesson is still unfinished, since each advance in civilization alters, as it were, the moral environment of society and demands a new adjustment on the part of individuals.

But, as Spencer and others have shown with great wealth of illustrative detail, it is this continual effort on the part of man to adjust himself to his environment that constitutes the mainspring of social and moral progress. On the one hand we have the individual man struggling to express himself, to exercise his physical activities, his feelings, and his mental powers ; and on the other hand, we have the limitations imposed by the equal desire on the part of others to realise their capabilities in the same way.

Social progress is represented by the change from the simple adjustments of these contending forces required in tribal life to the more complex balancing of barbaric existence, and to the still more complex adjustments, demanding a high measure of education and control, which life in a civilized community implies.

By developing this idea of the natural evolution of morals it is possible to find an adequate explanation of modern ethical codes, and also of the sense of right and wrong, which we call conscience.

The same conception supplies a sanction or authority for morality more secure (because more reasonable) and more appealing

(because more human) than that afforded by alleged divine revelation. But what the individual wants most in this practical world is an immediate rather than an ultimate reason why he should be moral.

The evolutionary view of morals supplies it by proving that moral conduct is precisely that which conduces to the highest welfare of the individual and of society. It demonstrates that man can find his truest happiness solely in the exercise of his faculties, with a due sense of the rights of others. Thus egoism and altruism become wedded at the altar of evolution.

The natural sanction for morality can, moreover, be made still more immediate in its power. Buddhism introduces the idea of causation into the moral sphere. It proves that actions and their results are bound together by an unbreakable chain of cause and effect, or, rather, that each action is a pebble dropped into the pool of life, radiating its influence infinitely in all directions. There is no need to create a heaven to reward virtue, or a hell to punish vice ; they have their inevitable result in this world.

For its own protection, and for the reformation of the individual, society imposes penalties and restrictions on the wrong-doer ; but not all the forces on earth can prevent a bad action having bad consequences, or a good action being blessed with good results. That which a man sows he shall also reap—not because God said he would, but because the sequence of cause and effect is as inflexible in the moral sphere as in the natural world. Neither prayers, nor repentance, nor forgiveness, will by themselves wash out our sins ; they can be atoned for only by the cleansing of the mind and by good actions which may compensate for the injury done to the individual character and to all affected by their influence.

In the light of such an iron law of retribution, whose invariable action is seen in every event of the moral history of the world, against whose fiat there is no appeal, it is impossible to suggest that moral laxity is the outcome of a rational view of ethics. When the sternness of the natural law of duty is realised, we are more likely to hear that it imposes too terrible a weight of moral responsibility.

If, the Christian may ask, there is not a God to appeal to for plenary pardon, no Mediator who sacrificed himself on the Cross in order that the effects of "original sin" might be cancelled, what hope is there for faltering, sin-imbued humanity ? The greatest consolation of Christianity, he may say, is that it offers

the penitent sinner a clear, direct way out of the consequences of sin. He has only to believe in Jesus Christ, who took upon himself the iniquities of the world.

Are we, then, to forego these beautiful promises, and to resign ourselves to an inexorable fate? Throughout the history of human thought man has struggled with the question: Am I a mere pawn on the chessboard of universal forces over which I have no control, or am I able to determine my fate, my destiny, to some degree at least? Philosophers have taken both sides of this issue, and many have ranged themselves between the two extremes. By far the great majority of philosophers have endeavoured to find some freedom for man.

Though subject to the factors of the universe in which man lives, he is able to inquire, think, plan, reach decisions and act upon them, with the result that he could shape his worldly existence to fit his desires. The pivot of progress is the intelligent human being, freely foreseeing the possible consequences of events, and throwing himself into the stream in order, in a degree, at least to change the course of the stream so that it conforms more fully to his ideals.

The Buddha held that man's crowning achievement is Knowledge (*vidya*). Having attained knowledge, man would do the right thing, he would be good. Without knowledge (*avidya*), man was in danger of acting wrongly. Further, He said that man could, through knowledge, have some influence upon his destiny, here and hereafter. Man might influence to some degree at least the fate which is his. Morality, for Buddhism, is not a matter of some inevitable law, but is a matter of free choice.

Jesus, the Christians believe, came to save man from sin. But sin implies guilt on the part of man, and guilt is meaningless unless man is in some way responsible for his sin. You cannot hold a man as guilty of an act unless he is able to act differently. Virtue, as well as evil, lies in our power. We are free to do that which is good, or to do that which is evil. There is no power in the universe forcing us either way.

Buddhism, in its moral aspect, is neither indulgent nor cruel. It is merely just. If it demonstrates that evil always begets evil, it proves likewise that good is the parent of good. If it holds that immoral conduct cannot have its effects erased by an act of grace, it shows that they may be balanced by the results of moral conduct. Thus it supplies not only a deterrent from evil, but a further stimulus to good conduct.

The ethical culture taught by the Master threw the whole burden of deliverance from evil upon the followers themselves. "Be ye your own torch," He told them, "yourselves your refuge." No one else could win the victory over the world for them, for no one could else conquer themselves. The Teacher might show them the way, but they must tread it alone.

Thus the Buddha taught that in each man, if he but looked, there was a Light, and that it was within each man's power to increase that light—within his power alone. None else could save him but himself. Man could be helped to find himself, but others could not do it for him. The cure for our ills, as the cause of them, lies in ourselves :

"No one saves us but ourselves ;
No one can, and no one may,
We ourselves must walk the Path—
Buddhas merely show the way "

It is no path of flowers ; it demands continuous effort, unceasing watchfulness, the maintenance of a moral tension that can never be relaxed.

The Great Ones only point the way ; in reality, each must find liberation for himself. No one else can carry us over the ocean of Samsara. It is through long ages of stress and struggle that each one must go through the process of refinement and culture till he reaches a stage of evolution where he is able to comprehend the nature of existence. It was left to a Catholic poet—Francis Thompson—to write :

"There is no expeditious road
To pack and label men for God
And save them by the barrel-load."

The most important part of moral action for each man lies, according to Buddhism, in the scope of his own inner life, in the exercise of incessant self-discipline. This exhortation recurs again and again, like a theme in a symphony: "If one man conquer in battle a thousand times a thousand men, and if another conquer himself, he is the greatest of conquerors." The first and the last step is the conquest of self. The Buddha says in the *Dhammapadu*:

Gradually, little by little, moment by moment,
Must he who is wise,
Cleanse his self of all impurity,
As the goldsmith refines silver.

Self is the saviour of self,
Self is the refuge of self ;
Therefore keep thy self in subjection,
As a horse-breaker a noble steed.

Self is the refuge of self ;
For who else could refuge be ?
By a fully controlled self
One obtains a refuge which is hard to gain.

So far as the external conditions of life are concerned, the follower has to learn that he is the master of his own destiny. His happiness or unhappiness is his own making. Happiness results from a proper adjustment to the laws of Nature, the immanent order (*Dharma*)—Unhappiness from mal-adjustment to this order (*Adharma*). It is not by prayer, but by leading a life in tune with this order, that man can enlarge his life, health, happiness and prosperity.

The Buddha taught that man's highest good lay in acting in harmony with the universe. Man is part of the universe and he should submit to the rule of the laws of the universe ; he should live according to the laws of Nature. The good man is one who lives so that he fits into the scheme of Nature, and obeys its laws.

Thus man must know the laws of the universe. If he knows the good, knows his place in the scheme of things, knows what is expected of him by Nature, and acts in harmony with the universe, he will be good. And the result of such living is happiness. Happiness is not to be sought after by prayer or worship, nor is it to be gained by itself. We strive to be good, to live in harmony with the cosmic laws that govern life, and happiness inevitably follows. Worship and prayer become an impossibility for those who are convinced that the natural course of events cannot be altered by calling upon a super-mundane power to interfere.

The origin of worship, of mankind's continuous effort to placate the gods, can be traced back to primitive man living in fear of natural phenomena. Thus those savages bowed themselves down to wood and stone, and, in their little mud huts before their idols, they pleaded for their desires, but the gods were silent. Little did they realise that prayer does not alter the unbroken law of cause and effect, which has been for all time, and will be for all eternity.

When men believed that the world was the centre of the universe, and that everything had been created for their particular benefit,

it was natural to assume that the Creator might adjust the machinery of Nature to suit the fervent desires of his faithful believers.

The supplications which were originally addressed to deified ancestors and to racial gods, were repeated to the Creator who made himself known in miracles and other revelations. Nothing was known then of the conservation of matter and energy ; divine intervention was merely a superior form of witchcraft. The first blow at this geocentrism was struck by Copernicus, who demonstrated that the sun, and not the earth, was the centre of the known universe.

Further astronomical discoveries revealed the operation of order in the solar system, so persistent that the position of the heavenly bodies could be predicted with certainty ; the earth was dethroned from its supreme position, and became a mere speck in the immensity of space. Discoveries in geology showed that man was a comparatively recent product of a long course of evolution ; and zoology showed that he had not been created in God's image, but developed from the lower animals ; and nature was seen to follow, with unwavering certainty, the law of causation, and not the varying law of Providential control.

In this way the teachings of science created a mental atmosphere in which the possibility of our petty momentary likes and dislikes being met by a derangement of the cosmos was seen to be the merest vanity.

The belief in the efficacy of prayer is, of course, associated with that spirit of dependence which leads to faith through submission, and is so contrary to the spirit of the time. When the hope of help from Heaven is finally abandoned, the reliance of manhood on its own unaided effort will be strengthened and completed.

All that side of prayer in which the Christian seeks protection from calamity or danger, or, in its more refined form, harmony with the divine Will, is shut off from the Buddhist. Before the bounties of Nature, the Buddhist utters no thanksgiving; before its vastness he feels no awe, before its ceaseless persistence he is without wonder, in its beauty he sees no gift of love. The quest of truth, the conquest of self, checks all the emotion which impels the Christian to recite the ancient summons; "Bless the Lord, all ye his works, in all places of his dominion; bless the Lord, O my soul."

The fact that one receives a favour prayed for does not necessarily mean that God—supposing a personal God to exist—exerted himself to alter the course of Nature to bring about the desired result. It is at least equally possible that the end in view was produced in the ordinary course of things. The *onus probandi*—and a heavy one it is—lies upon the believer who asserts that, because he asks God to do a certain thing, the uniformity of Nature, the sequence of natural cause and effect, is interrupted for his benefit.

Wish takes the place of prayer in Buddhism. In the *Majjhima Nikaya* the Buddha says that the strong aspiration of a good man takes effect: “If he should wish, after the destruction of the cardinal vices, to realize, by his own transcendent knowledge in this present world, initiation into, and abode in, the viceless deliverance of heart and intellect, it will come to pass.” It is not the answer of God to a petition, but the response of Cosmic Law.

For thousands of years this phenomenon has been studied, investigated and generalised upon, the whole ground of the religious faculties of man has been analysed, and the practical result is the science of *Raja-Yoga*. “It declares,” says Swami Vivekananda, “that each man is only a conduit for the infinite ocean of knowledge and power that lies beyond mankind. It teaches that desires and wants are in man, that the power of supply is also in man; and that wherever and whenever a desire, a want, a prayer has been fulfilled, it was out of this infinite magazine that the supply came, and not from any supernatural being. The idea of supernatural beings may arouse to a certain extent the power of action in man, but it also brings spiritual decay. It brings dependence; it brings fear; it brings superstition. It degenerates into a horrible belief in the natural weakness of man. There is no supernatural, says the Yogi, but there are in nature gross manifestations and subtle manifestations. The subtle are the causes, the gross the effects. The gross can be easily perceived by the senses; not so the subtle. The practice of *Raja-Yoga* will lead to the acquisition of the more subtle perceptions.”

Wish is a function of contemplation and meditation rather than petition. The wish may be of some intense desire, such as the aspiration for purity, but the psychological machinery will not operate unless the idea permeates the mind. Wish, to be of value, must not be directed to the purpose of trying to alter the course of Nature, nor to obtaining the gratification of some selfish desire.

Wish, to be of value, must have for its motive the increase of our benevolence for others, making us kinder and more considerate to all. Consequently, those who get help from wish should always direct their wish towards this goal, but never for the gratification of Self.

Prayer of this contemplative type is one of the central kernels of developed religion. It permits the bringing before the mind of a world of thought which in most people must inevitably be absent during the occupations of ordinary life; it allows the deepest longings of the human spirit, driven down below the surface by circumstance, to come into action; and it is the means by which the mind may fix itself upon this or that noble or beautiful or awe-inspiring idea, and so grow to it and come to realize it more fully.

Chapter V

THE "SINE QUA NON" OF HAPPINESS

THE history of human development proves that happiness—the goal of human desires—is a state of consciousness that does not depend upon the physical appetites and passions, nor upon the acquisition of material wealth. It proves further, that not even power or position or fame or honour is the guarantee of this coveted estate. Because of this universal fact, painfully demonstrated throughout the ages, there should be little wonder that the scientist and philosopher becomes sceptical on the subject of human happiness.

It is nevertheless true that the repeated failures of the past have not served to wipe out the hope and expectation of happiness from the minds of succeeding generations. This is a fact which can not be accounted for by the laws of heredity, as laid down by physical science. Does it not rather suggest that Nature, here as elsewhere, has really furnished adequate laws for what appears to be a universal necessity ?

If happiness were the outcome of physical satisfactions, man had never progressed beyond the limit of Nature's sufficiency. If the organs of digestion and reproduction were the real inspirations of life, then human intelligence had never risen beyond appreciation of the pleasures of appetite and of lust.

Physical nature is, in fact, easily satisfied. So easily, indeed, that without the higher intelligent ambitions and desires, life had never passed the stage of savagery. If material possession, in excess of physical necessity, could create happiness, then the words "wealth" and "happiness" would be synonymous. Is this the fact ? No, says Young in *Love of Fame* :—

" Can wealth give happiness ? Look round and see
What gay distress ! What splendid misery !
Whatever fortune lavishly can pour,
The mind annihilates, and calls for more ! "

It can scarcely be doubted that prosperity is not the infallible way to felicity. The mind of man is singularly discontented, and comfort is not enough. Socrates says: " Good food and rich clothes, all possible luxuries, are what you call happiness, but I

believe that a state of being where one wishes for nothing is the greatest of all bliss. To be able to approach the greatest happiness, one must get used to being satisfied with little."

After all, one can simplify one's needs and still get a great deal out of life. A man's body needs very little for its upkeep. Most of us eat too much. A man can cover his nakedness at small cost. A *Verti* cloth and a shirt open at the neck is an excellent costume for him, who wears a laugh in his eyes. A certain Oriental king who was very unhappy called a philosopher to him for advice. The philosopher asked him to find the most contented man in the realm and wear that man's shirt. After long search the king found that man—but he had no shirt!

A man with great financial resources will always be baulked in the employment of them, the reason being that, in the present structure of society, he cannot genuinely want as much as he has the means to buy. Or, if he genuinely does want so much, his conscience and the conscience of mankind will not allow him to keep it in mental peace. The things that people genuinely want are not, in the millionaire sense, dear. Hence the man with great financial resources cannot have full recourse to those resources. There must always be a large ineffective margin. Hence his great financial resources do not effectively make him a rich man.

To be rich is to possess the world, and nobody can do this without knowledge and experience and sympathy. You may be the owner of a great picture, but you will not really possess it until you can appreciate it, and you will not appreciate it until you have acquired knowledge and critical taste. As with pictures, so with everything else—be it in the realm of art or in the realm of Nature. To own without possessing is to be a mere figure of ridicule.

Money may buy the husk of many things without the kernel. It brings you food but not appetite, medicine but not health, acquaintances but no friends, service without loyalty, days of excitement but not peace or happiness. Wealth is not all. It cannot buy the best things. The most desirable possessions, peace of mind and happiness of heart, are beyond its grasp.

One sees, therefore, that all this struggle of modern life for monetary reward, additional comfort, more and more luxury, is intensified in its anxieties and stresses, if happiness is the purpose which spurs us on. At least it is true to say that there are moments in life when those material things are of no value whatsoever, compared with the mental or spiritual joy which may be felt without them

in a hut or hovel. Obviously, then, we are mistaken in attaching so much importance to material prosperity—although, no doubt, we must postulate a decent minimum.

There are certain essential necessities even to keep alive a Gandhi—even if one has spiritual ecstasy, or a Stoic indifference to comfort. One cannot ignore economics, and pretend that human nature can be happy in squalid conditions. Our "Cooly Lines" and slum areas could stifle human happiness. No method of life will create the chance of happiness if a large family has to live, eat, sleep and procreate in one miserable room, a breeding place of vice and bitterness—unless it is a community of Arahats.

Wealth and poverty, and happiness and misery, are relative terms. In a city one daily passes hundreds in the streets. Happiness as often appears in the eyes of street scavengers as on the faces of those who ride in saloon cars. The owner of the saloon car, draped in a thousand rupee saree, may wear a face like a gloomy rain cloud because her orchids did not win a prize at the Orchid Circle Show. The street scavenger, clad in a dirty tattered loin cloth, may be elated and beaming with happiness because he has found a fifty cent coin in the litter on the pavement.

Part of the tragedy of the poor consists in their usual belief that happiness is to be found in material welfare which, not having, they pass their lives in craving to obtain, or in vain resentment. The tragedy of the rich, on the other hand, consists in their not rising above their wealth, but clinging to it, and in being imprisoned and stifled by it. Hence, happiness is not found in either case.

A man encounters suffering and complains, but this is the result of his own mental inharmony. Another experiences blessedness, and it is the result of his own mental harmony. Blessedness, not material possessions, is the measure of right thought; wretchedness, not lack of material possessions, is the measure of wrong thought. A man may be rich and cursed; he may be poor and blessed. Blessedness and riches are only joined together when the riches are rightly and wisely used, and the poor man only descends into wretchedness when he begins to whine and revile his lot.

It is assumed by many people, as a matter of course, that if material prosperity is on a high scale, the sum of human happiness is thereby increased; and that if the wealth of a nation is reduced, unhappiness is the result. Carrying out this argument to its logical conclusion, it would appear to follow that the richer one is, the happier one is; and yet that is acknowledged as a falsity by all who have come in contact with rich people or have laid their own hands

on considerable wealth. Many of them are extremely unhappy. This wealth of theirs does not seem to satisfy their souls though they 'enjoy', as it is called, every comfort and most luxuries.

What, then, is the use of making everybody rich if the rich themselves are miserable ?

It might, therefore, be well to consider what are the essential needs of the human mind and body to attain something like happiness. Such an enquiry might have an effect upon economic theories and political doctrines ; for what will be the good of "abolition of private property" and "nationalisation of means of production" or the increase of wealth, and its better distribution if, at the end of the adventure, happiness has slipped out of the programme ?

"What human nature is really trying to find, in its eternal quest for happiness," writes Sir Philip Gibbs in his *Ways of Escape*, "is some system of government and society which will give to every individual a full and fair chance of developing his personality to the utmost: by interesting work and not too much of it, by security for himself and his family and his fellow humans (a sensitive and generous-hearted man cannot be happy if masses of human beings are suffering around him), by a decent minimum of comfort, and by liberty of thought and action restricted only by a code of honour which forbids him to be hurtful to his neighbours. In that liberty of thought and action he has his chance of adventure and delight: of becoming aware of beauty, penetrating further into knowledge, getting more mastery over himself and his surroundings, reaching out to everything in life which is worth having for mind and body.

"It is this awareness to life and to its aspects of beauty which gives human nature its rich quality, the real wealth for which we are all searching. Art, music, poetry, science, philosophy, have a value beyond material things, because they reveal life and make us more alive to its rhythm, more sensitive to the mystical joys of form, colour, sound, touch, smell—those senses and perceptions by which our minds are illumined, and by which we experience those moments of ecstasy or of revelation which reconcile us to much that is painful and tragic in this world. These things are denied and thwarted by modern civilization to masses of human beings. They have always been denied to the majority ; though, here and there, now and then some men and women have achieved them by some inward genius or by some luck of circumstance. Of course we have to pay for being sensitive to beauty. It makes us also sensitive to pain. That is the penalty of education, and the tragic dilemma of the human mind."

The thoughts of our well-meaning reformers appear to be directed to one end only, the equalising of human beings. When the millennium of this levelling process is attained, they think, there will be cessation of strife, and the consequent cessation of effort, for which there will no longer be any need. But how false it is to suppose that human beings desire unending ease, unthreatened safety, that their *summum bonum* is cushioned comfort, a folding of the hands to sleep. That way madness lies. What then is left to occupy their interest and attention? They desire rather difficulties, such is their nature; difficulties to elicit their powers, to keep them alert and wakeful. They wish to be *alive*. In the absence of resistance to desires, desires decay, and an intolerable, an appalling, tedium invades the human spirit. Whose lives do we read with interest and admiration? The lives of men lapped in comfort from the cradle to the grave? Or of those who, in the face of odds, have accomplished their ends, good or bad?

In their anxiety for human welfare, in their collectivist schemes, the sentimentalists have overlooked the individual man. They submerge him in the sea of their universal benevolence. But who desires to live in the pauperdom of their charity? Every man desires to be his own architect, and the creator of his own design, the sentimentalist himself among the rest. And the last and greatest insult you can offer to the human race is to regard it as a herd of cattle to be driven to your selected pasture. You deprive the individual of his last rag of self-respect, the most precious of his possessions, himself. If you treat him as a thing, an inanimate object, which can be pushed hither and thither; if you treat him as one of a drove of oxen, you take away his birth-right, and for this loss nothing can compensate him, not all the soothing syrups and honeys of the world.

Liberty and equality, in other any sense than equality of opportunity and political rights, are not Siamese twins, but are rather incompatible associates. The more you insist on having the one, the less of the other can you necessarily hold. The ideal, until a few decades ago, was a society in which liberty was recognised as the highest good. This we are now invited to reverse by making our main objective equality, and being content with such liberty only as does not obstruct the equalizing process.

Illustrations from the animal kingdom are suggestive. Ants, for example, have perfected the most highly socialized form of life. Among them the individual lives only for society, the colony applies the Marxian maxim, exacting from each according to his

ability and returning to each according to his needs; individualism is regarded as so dangerous that no variations whatever from the accepted type are tolerated. Such a life certainly seems dull and unimaginative. Yes, that is exactly what is the matter with it. The individual is denied the highest of all satisfactions, the privilege of being different.

In Russia, as everyone knows, the individual is no more than a cog in the machine, or one ant among a hundred and eighty million ants subject to the laws of the ant world. In theory if not in practice, every citizen of Russia is a servant of the State from whom is demanded absolute loyalty and obedience. He works, not for his own interests and gain, but for the welfare of the community, as termite ant or honey bee. He is subject to the law of the hive. In return for his one-man power, one unit of energy, intelligence and human skill, he is, in theory, given enough food to keep him alive, enough clothes to keep him warm, enough house room and all the other needs of human life, such as elementary education, medical service, technical training, amusement of a kind and recreation in some measure. The same conditions are given to women, and there is no inequality of reward—or very little—no distinction of class or rank or fortune, except that some men have the honour of leadership by the quality that is in them, or by their special service to the State.

One may admit that such a system may appeal to many minds, in theory; as we know, it does appeal to many minds outside Russia. Such a system, if successful, if possible in human nature—is it possible?—would take away many anxieties and agonies now prevailing under a system of capitalism and individual competition. It would relieve life of many injustices and inequalities which make for bitterness. There would be no under-dogs—theoretically. All would share alike in service and in reward. There would be no chance of a rich and luxurious minority, enjoying every comfort and good thing, while the masses of labour remain half-starved or starved. This national discipline and team-work might create great opportunities of material welfare for everyone, raising the general standard of living far above anything yet known, but not admitting high peaks of magnificence for anyone.

Communism in its philosophy and morality has certain similarities with Buddhism. It is also for the equality of man and of nations. It is also humanitarian, universalist, intellectualist, and rationalist. It is also pacifistic, internationalist. From this point

of view its moral and philosophical basis is the same as that of Buddhism. There is, of course, a fundamental difference between Communism and Marxism in their philosophical conception: Marxism, being based on the materialistic conception of history—believing in economic materialism as the real foundation of historical evolution and as the expression of the theory of class struggle—accepts metaphysical materialism as its philosophy; Buddhism and Communism in their essence and nature are spiritual.

The theory of Communism is at least as old as the Buddha (six centuries before Christ), but in its modern form it was worked out by Karl Marx about the middle of the nineteenth century. Communism is a noble, generous ideal—"a spiritual movement based on the deepest moral motives," as the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* describes it—which has haunted noble minds since the beginning of history.

One may conceive a Buddhist Communism as well as a Christian Communism, but in these instances voluntary and free; and if argued only from the economic standpoint, there is nothing contrary to any religious doctrine or any other ethical ideal in this idea of a community sharing all things in common. Are there not communities of bhikkhus, of monks and nuns, who have adopted that system? Have there not been attempts—in the United States and elsewhere—to found communities of ordinary folk who live according to this idea of equality?

When the Buddha said, that the noblest gift is the one that is given to the community (*Sanghika*), it was evident that He was laying down a Communist principle. And when the injunction, that gifts received by the community of bhikkhus (*Sangha*), must be shared on the principle of "to each according to his needs," was laid down, it was clear the Buddha was preaching Communism 2400 years before Karl Marx was born.

Jesus, also, in the parable of the labourers of the vineyard, laid down a Communist principle. Those who happened to be engaged late in the day, and to have worked only one hour, received as much payment as those who had worked since morning. Their wants were the same as those of the others; they had done all that was required of them, and therefore they were entitled to the same wage.

Yet we must bear in mind that Jesus also said: "If a man will not work, neither shall he eat." And the Buddha was laying down rules of living for a set of people who were almost like children ;

they never did a stroke of work to earn a living and expected others to feed, clothe and shelter them. Food, clothing and shelter constitute seventy-five per cent. of animal man's requirements, the other twenty-five per cent. being sex. Ninety per cent. of the people who are in the throes of the fierce struggle for existence to-day will readily forego sex if they are assured of the other three requisites.

It is a very far cry from now to the times when the general mass of people will receive their food, clothing and shelter without working for them. When mankind reaches that Utopian world, where such gifts will rain down from heaven, they will no doubt be shared amongst themselves, according to the Communist principle of "to each according to his needs." But so long as men have to sweat and labour for these things, the less idealistic method of living—"In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat thy bread,"—will have to be resorted to.

There are certain consequences of the Communistic State which seem inevitable and inseparable. If all property is in common, then family life seems to be weakened ; because a home for oneself, and the necessity of earning for a wife and children, have been the strongest motives for preserving the human family. If the individual has no importance beyond his little service to the State, then his rights as an individual, his rights over his children, and the old moralities which have hitherto held together the fabric of civilization, would be threatened.

In the individualist State a man labours to get a mate ; he toils to earn food for his children ; he struggles to give them a decent education and other advantages. His whole ambition, purpose and energy of life are centred in his family. But under the Russian system the family is no longer of great importance. It may be a hindrance to the State. In any case, a father is relieved of the necessity of working for his wife—she is also getting her rations as a toiler—and for his children, for whom the State provides. He has no personal responsibility. The woman has none of the material anxieties of motherhood. If she has a child, the State adopts it as a future worker, feeds it, educates it, disciplines it into the law of loyalty, and inspires it with fervour for the State religion—which is Marxism itself, as proclaimed by Lenin and the minor prophets. So there is not much need for enduring marriage, unless one feels like it. A man and woman come together for a time. If they have a child, they hand it over to the nearest

creche. They may divorce each other without recourse even to the proverbial, "marry with a wink and divorce with a kick", of the Kandyans.

The State has a right to take the man away from one place and send him to another where his labour is required. No man is allowed to express private opinions hostile to the State or the law of the commonweal. History, literature and art are equally the servants of the State ideal. There must be no "heresies," lest the State be disturbed. There must be no departures from type, lest order be upset. The Marxist State does not tolerate erratic genius, rebel minds, oddities of character, private interpretations of obedience. Human nature is standardized. Men's minds are standardized. Their way of life is standardized; because any retreat of the individual into a place and life of his own would be contrary to the communal faith and order. All this seems inherent in the system. There must be this regimentation, this barrack life, this common discipline, to make the system work. Inevitably, if it endures, it must produce a human type and society from which many individual differences are eliminated, with all individual responsibilities and initiative. It is the death of the separate individual creator, that the Communal State inhabited by a collectivized man, a collective man, living collectively a collectivized existence, and collectively thinking, feeling and aspiring may live.

Collectivism means subjugation of the individual to a group, whether to a race, class or State does not matter. It holds that man must be chained to collective action and collective thought for the sake of what is called "the common good."

No tyrant ever rose to power except on the claim of representing and furthering "the common good." Mussolini "served the common good" of Italy, Hitler "served the common good" of Germany.

Men have been enslaved primarily by spiritual weapons. And the greatest of these is the collectivist doctrine that the supremacy of the State over the individual constitutes the common good. No dictator could rise if men held, as a sacred faith, the conviction that they have inalienable rights of which they cannot be deprived for any cause whatsoever, by any man whomsoever; neither by evildoer nor supposed benefactor.

This is the basic tenet of individualism, as opposed to collectivism. Individualism holds that man is an independent entity with an inalienable right to the pursuit of his own happiness in a society where men deal with one another as equals.

Thus two very different conceptions of human life are struggling for mastery of the world. In one we see man's greatness in the individual life. A great society, for us, is one which is composed of individuals who, as far as is humanly possible, are happy and free and creative. We do not think that individuals should be all alike. We conceive society as like an orchestra, in which the different performers have different parts to play and different instruments upon which to perform, and in which co-operation results from a conscious common purpose.

We believe that each individual should have his proper pride. He should have his personal conscience and his personal aims, which he should be free to develop except where they can be shown to cause injury to others. We attach importance to the diminution of suffering and poverty, to the increase of knowledge and the production of beauty and art. The State, for us, is a convenience, not an object of worship.

The Russian Government has a different conception of the ends of life. The individual is thought of no importance; he is expendable. What is important is the State, which is regarded as something almost divine, and having a welfare of its own consisting in the welfare of citizens. This view, which Marx took over from Hegel, is fundamentally opposed to the Buddhist ethic, which is accepted by free thinkers as much as by the Buddhists.

In the Soviet world human dignity counts for nothing. It is thought right and proper that men should be grovelling slaves, bowing down before the semi-divine beings, who embody the greatness of the State; it is this conception that those who believe in the value of individuality have to fight—a conception which would, if it prevailed, take everything out of life that gives it value, leaving nothing but a regimented collection of grovelling animals.

If democracy is to survive, we must understand the principles of individualism, and hold them as our standard in any public question, in every issue we face. We must learn to reject as total evil the conception that the common good is served by the abolition of individual rights. General happiness cannot be created out of general suffering and self-immolation. The only happy society is one of happy individuals. The power of society must always be limited by the basic, inalienable rights of the individual.

The real objection to Communism is that, though it suits bees and ants, whose civilization has reached a stable equilibrium, it will never suit human beings. The voluntary sharing of possessions

according to the practice of some religious bodies has nothing to do with Political Communism. Man is an incorrigibly competitive animal. He is sometimes too keen to win ; he ought to have other interests ; but we shall not cure him by forcing him to a dictated felicity.

To look these facts in the face is realism. We are indeed committed to the task of trying to improve the lot of mankind. But let us be realists. Those who build paper Utopias show a strange unfamiliarity with human nature. As Professor W. Macneile Dixon points out in his Gifford Lectures: "No means will ever be found to induce human beings finally to surrender themselves, either body or soul, to a dictated felicity, to satisfactions chosen for them, whatever vulgar Caesars rule the world. And upon this rock all forms of regimentation, of standardized existence, will eventually shipwreck. Every type of compulsion is hateful, always has been, and always will be hateful, so long as men are men. Was this freedom, about which the poets have raved since the world began, for which men have died in millions, worth the bones of a single soldier ? Have you ever asked why men have fought for liberty ? Not for amusement. Freedom they must have, whether they know or not what to do with it ; freedom to choose cause or party, order or disorder, the good or the bad ; to steer each his own vessel to the port of his desire. Take away his choice, and you make of him, for all your benevolent intentions, a chattel or slave.

"There is a rebel in every man ; men will revolt and demand again their freedom. As Dostoievsky expressed it, when everything is smooth and ordered and perfect, in the midst of this universal reason, there will appear, all of a sudden and unexpectedly, some common-faced, or rather cynical and sneering gentleman, who, with his arms akimbo, will say to us, 'Now then, you fellows, what about smashing all this reason to bits, sending their logarithms to the devil, and living according to our own silly will?' And he will have followers in their thousands. Men desire the strangest and, in their neighbours' eyes, the most incomprehensible, the most irrational, the most preposterous things."

Chapter VI

IS VIOLENCE ESSENTIAL ?

IN its journey through life, mankind, throughout the ages, has looked to certain ideals as its guiding lights. The highest ethical concepts of the Aryan people are the twin abstractions, Truth and Right. The greatest of the Aryans brought them to the concrete sphere when he declared :

*Sabba pāpassa akaranan
Kusalassa upasampadā,*

in other words, to do good to others is virtue, and to do evil to others is sin. And He also added a third one ;

Sa citta pariyodapanan

that is, the greatest service to one's own self is to live with a clean heart.

Here, in these three short lines, we have the cream of the teachings of the Buddha. And it is a very simple teaching, too. It touches life at all points and covers the whole sphere of human conduct and moral progress. It involves no dogmas, no sacraments, no rites and ceremonies, which in the history of religions have been so fruitful a cause of dissension and slaughter among men. In these three lines we have a whole religion ; a religion which requires neither gods, priests nor temples, since these are you and within you.

The unique character of the Buddha's teaching lies in the last line—*Sa citta pariyodapanan*. All other religious teaching emphasizes man's obligation to others, but says little about his obligation to himself. One of the great discoveries of modern psychology is that our attitudes toward ourselves are even more complicated than our attitudes toward others. The great commandment of Christ, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," might now be better interpreted, in the light of the Buddha's teaching, to mean, "Thou shalt love thyself properly, and *then* thou wilt love thy neighbour well."

"The elders of our race have left us proverbs, maxims and precepts by which to regulate our steps in the journey of life," says the Rt. Hon. Dr. V. S. Sirinivasa Sastri. "Each man has a selection of these to which he turns by habit. Faith, Hope and Charity,

appeal to a certain class of people. Others, philosophically disposed, look upon Truth, Beauty and Goodness as the values which remain in the ultimate analysis."

"In spite of the modern education that I have received," adds Dr. Sastri, "instinct draws me to our own categories. Truth, Justice and Benevolence, form my triad. Benevolence, as I understand it, includes kindness to all life and what in our code is called *Kshama*, one word for the negative virtue of forbearance and the positive virtue of forgiveness together."

Dr. Einstein's ideals are Truth, Goodness and Beauty. In the essay entitled "The meaning of Life" in *The World as I see it*, he says: "The ideals which have lighted me on my way, and time after time given me new courage to face life cheerfully, have been Truth, Goodness, and Beauty. Everybody has certain ideals which determine the direction of his endeavours and his judgments. I have never looked upon ease and happiness as ends in themselves—such an ethical basis I call more proper for a herd of swine."

Einstein thus rejects ease and happiness as 'ends' fit only for swine. Happiness, according to him, is not an end to pursue.

"What is happiness? The gleam
Of a dream within a dream
While you know it not, 'tis with you,
Grasp the vision and 'twill leave you,
And your empty arms confess
Its counterfeit, forgetfulness."

It is a sign, perhaps, that something worth while is being pursued, a characteristic of a state in which a human being's capacities are being fulfilled. Happiness, according to Einstein, is not an end to be chosen instead of Truth, Beauty and Goodness; which are forms of experiences of knowing something to be true, contemplating something beautiful, fulfilling one's duty.

During many ages and particularly in our own times, Physical Force has been looked upon by some creeds as well as by some nations as essential for human progress. For more than a thousand years, the creed of Physical Force in the creation of a new social order was based on the religious persecutions of Europe. Most European countries have, at this moment, the religion which was that of their governments in the late sixteenth century, and this must be attributed mainly to the control of persecution and propaganda by means of the armed forces in the several countries.

A creed never has force at its command to begin with. The first steps in the production of a wide-spread opinion must be taken by means of persuasion alone. The Buddha adopted this course and was quite successful. Pure persuasion leading to the conversion of a minority ; then to expose the rest of the community to the right propaganda ; when, finally, there emerges genuine belief on the part of the great majority, which makes the use of force unnecessary.

The creation of the world —said Plato—is the victory of persuasion over force. The worth of men consists in their liability to persuasion. They can persuade and can be persuaded by the disclosure of alternatives, the better and the worse. Civilization is the maintenance of social order, by its own inherent persuasiveness as embodying the nobler alternative. The recourse to force, however, unavoidable, is a disclosure of the failure of civilization, either in the general society or in a remnant of individuals.

When man becomes civilized he discards material weapons for the struggle that is life, and replaces them by those of the mind. They consist of knowledge, of wisdom and of persuasion through argument.

In a civilized community the whole of public life is an example of this form of struggle. We find it expressed in the administration of justice, as well as in the social order, and in the individual's struggle for a livelihood. Fighting with physical weapons is an exception and, in most cases, punishable.

The choice of the means determines the nature of the ends. A society which looks towards force as its main instrument cannot be a peaceful society, however sincere for the time being its profession of peace may be. Structure depends far more on means than on ends.

History is filled with evidence that leadership by force cannot endure. The downfall and disappearance of "dictators" is significant. It means that people will not follow forced leadership indefinitely. The destiny of each of the dictators was written years ago in Latin: *Intrabit ut vulpis, regnabit ut leo, morietur ut canis.* "He will come in like a fox, reign like a lion, and die like a dog."

The dictator is a man who, too cynical or too impatient to wait on the slow course of human self-development, attempts to forestall it by violent methods. "Be my brother or I'll knock your block off!" he says. And so he seeks to create an economy in which everyone can be happy by means of establishing a polity in which no one can be happy.

Furthermore, a dictatorship is always an evil. It commits immeasurable cruelties and oppressions, as we see around us. It always ends in turmoil and rebellion. What, then, should a proletariat strive to do? It should not strive to become a dictatorship. It should strive to cease to be a proletariat, to achieve its own well-being and its own welfare, and to rise to a higher position, economic, moral and political. We reject theories of the justification of violence. Robespierre described the Government of the Revolution as "the despotism of freedom against tyranny". This is mere verbiage, a mere specious subterfuge.

The world has just entered a new era of relationships between leaders and followers, which very clearly calls for new leaders, and a new brand of leadership in politics, in business and in industry. Those who belong to the old school of leadership-by-force must acquire an understanding of the new brand of leadership (co-operation), or be relegated to the rank and file of the followers. For them, there is no other way out.

To many minds the idea of Revolution is almost inseparable from "*Struggle, Violence and Brute Force*." But this is only one type of revolution. In North America the people of the United States appealed to the "sacred right of rebellion" when they found themselves precluded from any share in the passing of the laws imposed upon them by the British Parliament, and decided "to dissolve the political bands which connect them with another." A revolution need not be a spontaneous storm of indignation against "abuses and usurpations" or indignities and deprivations. It can take quite other forms.

As a second type of revolution which is in sharp contrast to the "indignation-revolt," we may take what we may call the "revolution conspiracy," in which a number of people set about organizing the forces of discomfort and resentment and loosening the grip of the Government's forces, in order to bring about a fundamental change of system. The ideal of this type is the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia. Reduced to a working theory by its advocates, it is conceived as a systematic cultivation of a public state of mind favourable to a revolution, together with an inner circle of preparation for a "seizure of power."

But a revolution need not be an explosion or a *coup d'etat*. And the revolution that lies before us now, and the only hopeful alternative to chaos, is to be attained, if it is to be attained at all, by neither of these methods. The first is too rhetorical and chaotic

and simply leads to a champion and a tyranny ; the second is too conspiratorial and leads through an obscure struggle of masterful personalities to a similar end.

An altogether different type of revolution is now possible. It depends for its success upon whether a sufficient number of minds can be brought to realize that the choice before us now is not a choice between further revolution, or more or less reactionary conservatism, but a choice between our carrying on and so organizing the process of change in our affairs as to produce a new social order, or suffering an entire and perhaps irreparable social collapse.

The reconstruction of society has at first to be mainly the work of a "movement" or a party or a religion or cult, whatever we choose to call it. It need not be a close-knit organization, toeing the party line and so forth. It may be very loose-knit and many-faceted, but if a sufficient number of minds in the country, irrespective of race, religion, political party and social habituations, can be brought to the free and candid recognition of the essentials of the problem, then their effective collaboration in a conscious, explicit and open effort to reconstruct society will ensue.

The opening phase of this new type of revolution must, therefore, be the presentation of a programme or a manifesto. To accomplish anything you need an interest, a motive, a centre for your thought. You need a star to steer by, a cause, a creed, an idea, a passionate attachment. Men have followed many guiding lights. They have been inspired by love of fame and love of country. They have pursued power, wealth, holiness. They have followed the Buddha, Krishna, Christ, Mohammed, Alexander, Asoka, Dutugemunu, Genghis Khan, Washington, Napoleon. Something must beckon you or nothing is done, something about which you ask no questions. Thought needs a fulcrum for its lever, effort demands an incentive or an aim.

Has anyone yet studied the infective power of ideas, their modes of transmission or magnetic fields ? Does anyone understand the psychology of religious revivals, of mass suggestion, of tidal waves of emotion ? Yet these have sent armies of crusaders to Jerusalem ; driven the Buddhists of Ceylon to the banners of Migettuvatte Thero and of Anagarika Dharmapala ; induced 150 million Russians to follow Lenin, the prophet of Karl Marx ; and 300 million Indians to prostrate themselves before the "half-naked fakir" of Winston Churchill.

Ideas are the most mysterious things in a mysterious world. Thomas Paine, branded by bigots and fanatics as an atheist and a

blasphemer, writes a pamphlet entitled *Common Sense*, and Britain loses America. "A high flown journalist named Rousseau," said Friedell, "writes a couple of bizarre pamphlets, and for six years a highly gifted people tears itself to pieces. A stay-at-home scholar, named Marx, indifferent to and ignored by society, writes a few fat volumes of unintelligible philosophy, and a gigantic empire alters its whole condition of life from the base upward." A 'little lady' writes *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and it brews a big war and influences the abolition of slavery. An ex-house painter writes a single volume and brings the whole world crashing down.

Fortunately, the instrument for achieving the work of national freedom and social uplift lies ready at hand, namely Universal Suffrage. Here we, of Lanka, possess this priceless boon of democracy for which the torch-bearers of liberty and social justice died. It is a gift for which the people must thank the Donoughmore Commissioners and is the *Magna Carta* of the citizen. It is the greatest boon conferred on the people of Ceylon since the inception of British rule.

By its means, without violent change, power has passed from one class to another—from the landed interest to the workers—from the Haves to the Have-nots—and government, once the monopoly of a few, has been extended to the many.

With this instrument we can "*Progress to higher Social Forms without Collapse of existing forms, entailing widespread Suffering*," provided that we continue in this country to respect the will of the majority, the rights of the minorities and to practise the principles of democracy.

"For a Socialist movement to develop into a constitutional political party, there must be a democratic constitution, with a franchise sufficiently wide to make possible the achievement of political power by the masses," says C. R. Attlee, Premier of Britain, in *The Labour Party in Perspective*. Certainly, we have that franchise. But, of course, there can be no democracy in Lanka so long as an alien Christian King, the "Defender of the Faith," is astride the Lion Throne of Lanka.

Having universal suffrage does not necessarily mean that there is democracy in a country. The discriminate use of the vote, based on a party system with clearly defined programmes, is the essential background of a democratic State; where a genuine party system is absent, the government in power may hardly be called representative, and it necessarily tends to be arbitrary. As long as such a

situation obtains, and until the ordinary citizen wields the substance and not the shadow of political power, democracy must remain a farce. Today, Ceylon is a Dominion of the British Commonwealth not in accordance with the will of the majority but by the decision of a minority. If a direct vote is taken, ninety per cent of the Ceylon Electorate will reject the King of England from being the King of Lanka.

It has been suggested that the basis of the British Commonwealth of Nations is "kinship, kinship and practical comradeship." We in Ceylon can claim no kinship with the peoples of the older Dominions, nor can we look on the English king with any genuine sentiments of love and homage, or imagine that he symbolizes all that is most valuable in our aims and traditions. The real basis of our association rests no doubt largely on an element of camaraderie, but more so in community of material interest and a joint faith and allegiance to the democratic way of life. Above all, it behoves us to keep in mind that "the British System," as Sir Mohamed Zafrullah Khan, Pakistan Foreign Minister, recently said, "is held as the most beneficent form of democracy in the modern world, but it was not until very recently that political power in Britain passed into the hands of the ordinary citizen."

Human happiness and progress can only flourish in an atmosphere of justice. This atmosphere is more likely to be found in a democratic community than anywhere else. The reason is not far to seek. The essence of democracy—government by discussion and consent—is that principle which proclaims the right of citizens to participate in the government of their country and, if they think fit, to change the government by peaceful methods. In other words, they must have recourse to reason and discussion. Trial by battle is ruled out. The citizens are precluded from employing the bullet and the bayonet so long as they have it in their power to achieve their ends by the use of the ballot-box.

In such circumstances they would forfeit the "sacred right of rebellion." This ancient doctrine, cherished by revolutionaries in every age, cannot be recognised. It is treason to the community. Such a right finds no place in a society which is governed by reason and discussion, and in which every member is entitled to play a part in framing the laws and determining the policy of his country. No longer does the citizen possess the moral right to invoke the aid of physical violence to attain his objectives. The fundamental doctrine of the Buddha is the sacredness of all life. The fundamental characteristic of man is reverence for law.

Ours is the obligation to remind those who follow these pages that the keystone of the political system, which, as we believe, remains as the most hopeful plan of government yet evolved for human progress, is the ballot. Through the system of parliamentary representation—the Anglo-Saxon contribution to the development of democratic government—every citizen is able, by registering his vote, to exert his influence upon the affairs of the nation. He is thus able to assume an indirect share in the government of his country and in the framing of its laws.

The form of government which Anglo-Saxon democracies have adopted is representative institutions. England built it up by some eight centuries of trial and error. America created it in one act, though of course that act was itself a part of history. Eagerness for social legislation is apt to make the reformer neglect the importance of political machinery. There is noticeable in many quarters a growing impatience of representative government, a dislike of discussion of what are contemptuously called ‘‘constitutional conundrums,’’ a certain craving even for the dictator, the strong man, who will carry out great schemes promptly and ruthlessly. All these symptoms contain elements of danger.

It is something, indeed, to recognise the secondary character of all merely political changes ; it is something to see that what is called ‘‘free government’’ is not everything; it is something even to give the lie explicitly to false notions of equality, and to feel the need of superior skill and superior force. But while admitting that machinery is only a means to an end, we must not suppose that any means will do equally well. Great changes in political institutions have probably yet to come : we are only beginning to see the problems of the proper working of democratic government.

‘‘It is the essence of Western democracy that there should be a Government and an Opposition and that there should be many voices.’’ So spoke Mr. Clement Attlee, the British Prime Minister, indicating the vital difference between Britain and Soviet Russia. The Russian Communists believe that, for the effective functioning of democracy, there should be only one party, the Government party. This is a concept they shared with the Nazis of Germany and the Fascists of Italy. There was little else in common between Russian Communism and its antithesis. The common element is the result of an insatiable lust for power.

According to Mr. Attlee, it is the essence of Western democracy that there should be a Government and an Opposition. If there

are to be a Government and an Opposition, there must be at least two parties. Those who are fond of denouncing party-government seem to forget that, so far as experience goes, there is something worse than party-government, and that is the absence of definite and responsible parties altogether, and the predominance in politics of *swadina* (independent) or haphazard combinations of fluctuating groups. Practically every quarrel which has split a political party and created another party has been due, not to an honest difference in doctrine, but to one group's jealousy of the power and influence held by another.

Now political propaganda is of two sorts—honest and dishonest. The first is relatively cheap, the second is expensive. To convince another individual that your view is right means a fair case, sound argument, and wit, none of which can cost very much. But in these days to buy a man's vote costs a lot, both directly and indirectly. Hence the very rich politician who craves for power must either keep his money or be dishonest. If he seeks power he will soon discover that the secret of power is not money but personality. And if he has not personality, he may buy power but he will never really use it—somebody else will be using it for him.

It is man's privilege to assume the responsibilities of citizenship. And it is his responsibility to ensure the privileges of his fellow citizens. Two things are vital to democracy: that every man grant every other the rights he claims for himself, and that every man accept the obligations he expects the other to fulfil. The good citizen concerns himself with the privileges of others and his own responsibilities.

And yours is not the privilege of refusing or failing to vote. Here the right enjoins the duty. Every voter is bound to go to the polls and vote without any other direction than that coming from his or her own individual conscience. William Jennings Bryan once described America as "a republic in which all men are sovereign but in which no man cares to wear a crown." The crown of Lanka's sovereignty is the ballot, and the citizen who abuses the vote not only endangers the State and denies his kingship, but also drops to the path to "hell," because the Buddha has said: "CONSCIOUS PURSUIT OF TRUTH AND RIGHT" is the first step in one's path to Happiness.

A man cannot ever be a true Buddhist without doing his level best to be a true citizen. There are some who profess to believe, and indeed who do believe, that religion has no place in government. Without religion in it government is *ipso facto* insecure.

If Buddhism is not thus practical the Master's injunction, *Dhammajivi*—"BY RIGHTEOUSNESS OF ACTION AND LIVING", is not a practicable proposition.

The Buddha was no mere theorist. By every test of what He said, and of what He did and of what He was, He demonstrated himself to be the world's pre-eminent Man of affairs. Always He declared a faith of service, a ministry of sacrifice and achievement, and a social redemption that moved the living dead toward an abundance in living, a ministry that spoke not only in the past and future tenses but also in the present. As the *Sigālovāda Sutta* shows, the Buddha had no less to do with the home right here than with the home over there. How perfectly He related the 'worlds elsewhere' to the humdrum responsibilities of our existence in the here and now !

Chapter VII

EVOLUTION OR REVOLUTION?

LEGENDS of Golden Ages, of Gardens of Eden, of simpler times and ways, of years when faithful toil never went unrewarded, when the domestic and public virtues flourished unimpaired, and universal contentment was expressed on every face—such legends have an appeal to mankind at all times. They are like a middle-aged man's memories of his youth, which he sees through a kind of golden twilight.

The truth is that there probably never was a Golden Age. At no time has there been stability. High hopes sat astride the heavy packs the early pioneers carried on their heads, but there were graves beside all the trails. There were dolorous issues, then as now, and no civilization has been static. Each generation was presented with new situations, new problems and uncertainties, and always mankind had a sense of insecurity.

Indeed, it is these very things that account for the energy and for changes which, on the whole, add up to progress. It is not the contentment of those early men that we should imitate—for assuredly they had it at intervals as rare as our own. It is their courage and resolution that we need. They met their problems and did their chores, and did not know the end of the story—nor do we.

They lived, worked, had their glowing and happy moments, and passed on a heritage compounded of achievement and unfinished business—as we shall doubtless do, too. The Golden Age was not born with them and did not die with them. It is ours as much as theirs—and never wholly any generation's or any people's.

But we cannot legislate a Golden Age into existence. The *Soulbury Report* quotes that well-known dictum from Horace's *Odes*: *Quid leges sine moribus vanae proficiunt?* which, translated, means: "What do empty laws avail without character?" Here is the crux of the problem: we cannot create any agency or commonweal stronger than the accumulated integrity of the individuals who comprise it. And it is this inward quest and integrity of character that must increasingly become our foremost preoccupation. This education, slow and painful, must be carried on from infancy, in every home, class-room and temple by means of parental example and stern precept. Essentially, such education is the welding of firm-knit, well-integrated individuals, undeluded by promises of unearned

ease, able and willing to accept the burdens that have to be borne with fortitude—borne without resentment and without blaming others for the severity of life. It is an ideal not easy to attain, but, in comparison with its rewards, no other ideal is worth attaining.

No change in political machinery and no change in social institutions will lead to social stability and to the "obtaining of happiness" on the part of the citizen, unless the moral feelings of the community are adapted to the new institutions. This is the most important reason of all why successful reforms must be brought about gradually. Here we come upon the antinomy which is always recurring in discussions on social progress. On the one side, "No progress is possible without a moral improvement in the individual"; and so it is often inferred that no external or material change is of any use. On the other side, "Change the circumstances which mould men's characters, and the characters will change"; and so it is often inferred that external or material changes are the sole things needed.

Each premise is true, but not the whole truth ; and therefore both inferences are fallacious. Human beings are dependent on circumstances, but they have also natures of their own, natures inherited from their ancestors, and modified by reflection, environment and sentiment, so that for social progress there must be harmony between character and circumstances. Progress takes place through some individuals being in advance of the average of their neighbours in their ideals and sentiments; a certain diffusion of these ideals and sentiments among others is necessary under any form of government, most of all under a democratic form, in order to bring about legislative changes.

A law or institution once established, if it is backed by a fair amount of approving sentiment, fixes and makes definite the ideals to which it corresponds. If it is not backed by such approving sentiment, it remains more or less a dead-letter, or it provokes active opposition; in either case it fails to produce its proper effect, and no real progress has been effected by its means.

Laws and institutions to be progressive must furthermore be educative ; they must be such as prepare people to go beyond them, in quiet and orderly fashion. When some evils are specially prominent, the changes that promise a relief from these evils are thought of as if they were final changes, could they only be obtained. Reformers are always apt to look forward to "living happily ever afterwards," when once the great crisis is over. But it is only

in old-fashioned stories that trouble ends with the wedding bells ; and it is a very crude and inexperienced kind of political thinking which expects even the biggest of Collectivist schemes to leave over no social problems for the future.

It is wiser, though a rare wisdom, frankly to disclaim finality. It may destroy the opportunity for much moving rhetoric, but it will save a good deal of painful disillusion. A plan which offers opportunities for alteration, even for moving back again, if necessary, is preferable to one which admits of no return, and leaves amendment out of the question. Too great completeness is not a merit in a political or social programme.

Two different kinds of objections are likely to be made to such a political creed as is indicated in the foregoing words. The first is that of the eager reformer or the revolutionary, who is wearied with wandering in the wilderness, who wants his millennium to begin tomorrow, and who wishes to rush impetuously, by way of "*Struggle, Violence, and Brute Force*," into the promised land he has pictured to himself.

The other objection is that put forward by the pessimist or the Karmic-theory man, who believes that our fate in life has been fixed in advance, and that nothing that we may now do can alter it, and who is very sceptical about any amelioration in the intellect or the character of the mass of mankind. This pessimist also sees too clearly that every advance in external comfort only brings new cravings and new pains, more vividly realised than the old dumb, hopeless suffering or apathy ; to him resignation is the supreme virtue, and what is called political and social progress a matter of indifference. Such pessimism about the worth of human society may go along with an intense belief in the certain bliss of another world, in comparison with which every other aim is empty ; or it may exist in the more bitter form that has no hope to outweigh its despair.

Let us take this second objection before returning to the first. Suppose we admit the impossibility of any final or complete happiness for beings, such as we are, in any future, either here or elsewhere : Then it is surely a piece of "abstract thinking" to ignore the difference between a worse and a better—or, let us say, a less bad—condition in human affairs. Before the pessimist convinces us as to the worthlessness of all social effort, it is surely reasonable to try whether life cannot be made more tolerable, more worth living, to the mass of human beings than it has been hitherto.

Those who sincerely discard the will-to-live must inevitably give place to those who assert it. Pessimism never can be anything but a bye-product of the reflective consciousness, relatively useful if it quickens sympathy with suffering, and thus stimulates the effort to relieve it. Pessimism then becomes an element in that very striving after social progress which, if taken as a final creed, it seemed logically to condemn. And to this practical self-repudiation of pessimism may be added the philosophical consideration, that the mere judgment that human life or human society is evil implies an ideal of goodness and perfection by which, as a standard, the existing world is judged.

Such a contrast between the ideal and the actual is explicitly recognised in the pessimism of religious recluses. And the sense of the contrast leads the more courageous spirits to seek to overcome it. It was the courageous Sangha, who, saying farewell to motherland and braving the seas in frail craft, became to the Sinhalese the first missionaries of ancient learning and civilization. It was under their inspiration and that of their successors that the early rulers of Lanka fought, according to their lights, with disease and want and ignorance. It was they who, without ornaments and without books, trained some of the greatest of our ancient scholars and kindled the fire of Sinhalese art.

In the modern movement for diffusing the benefits of civilization and improving the conditions of human life, amid all the errors and absurdities and narrowness of outlook that inevitably accompany any great movement, can we not still recognise the similarity of the aspiration that is expressed in the one prayer in which all sections of divided religions unite,—the aspiration that the heavenly kingdom, the reign of peace and righteousness and love, should not remain a far-off vision, but should be realised here, in the actual human world? In His first discourse, at Isipatana in Benares, the Buddha tells the five disciples: "If ye walk according to My teaching, ye shall, even in this present life, be partakers in a short time of that supreme happiness, the highest aspiration of religious effort." Similarly, the Christian, in his daily prayer, says: "Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

The practical idealist alone is best fitted to find out the means whereby the benefit of the wealth of a country may reach the masses. He will have to choose between the revolutionary method and the evolutionary method. The revolutionary method will have the attraction of quicker attainment, but it needs to ride

rough-shod over human freedom. Revolutions, which begin in the name of reason, commonly end in wholesale slaughter. Men become weary of argument with the obtuse people who oppose them, and take to a quicker method of persuasion—throat-cutting. ‘A whiff of grape-shot’ is still the most cogent logic for the moment of emergency. The question will, therefore, arise as to whether the gain aimed at is worth having at the expense of what is so precious.

The evolutionary or the democratic method works more slowly, but has this advantage over its rival, that it honours human freedom. Under this method a sense of trusteeship, which takes into account human personality on the basis that “we are members one of another,” has a better chance of growing.

The Russians deem themselves to be engaged in a war that can only be resolved by the destruction of all rival ways of living, and the establishment of Marxist world government. It is, therefore, the deliberate policy of Russia to destroy the economy of non-Marxist States. To do so they are prepared to resort to any methods short of engaging in armed conflict.

Marxism is based on the belief that man is so weak and inadequate that he is unable to govern himself, and therefore requires the rule of a strong master.—Democracy is based on the conviction that man has moral and intellectual capacity, as well as the inalienable right to govern himself, with reason and justice.

Marxism subjects the individual to arrest without lawful cause, punishment without trial, and forced labour as a chattel of the State—Democracy maintains that Government is established for the benefit of the individual and is charged with the responsibility of protecting the rights of the individual and his freedom in the exercise of his abilities.

Marxism maintains that social wrongs cannot be corrected “*Without Collapse of existing forms entailing widespread Suffering.*” —Democracy has proved that social justice can be achieved through peaceful change.

Marxism holds that men are so deeply divided into opposing classes that, without “*Struggle, Violence, and Brute Force,*” humanity cannot progress to higher social forms.—Democracy holds that men can “*by Force of Intelligence go forward to Better Things,*” and maintain lasting peace.

No plan for economic salvation can be accepted, if it is tainted with disdain for life. Ultimately, the Russian experiment will

be judged, not by the goal of a full belly, but by how much freedom, self-respect, justice, tolerance and human kindness it has brought into the world, or how much of these it has driven out.

If we look at human history as a whole, we see how recent and how rare civilization has been; and in striving after an extension of its benefits to larger numbers, we must be very careful that, if possible, none of the hardly accumulated gains of humanity be lost in the process. To prevent such loss we must be content, we must even be glad, if the transition to a new form of society takes place more slowly than some enthusiasts desire. Any attempt to transform institutions suddenly is certain to bring disaster, to involve loss, and to provoke reaction. We may envy the feelings of exhilaration with which the earlier stages of the Russian Revolution were greeted by workers in other lands as well as in Russia, but the bitter disillusion and the dreary years of reaction and oppression which followed remain as a salutary warning, if only we can learn by it.

Another reason why progress must be gradual is that no one nation can solve problems apart from other nations. The solidarity of the interests of the working classes throughout the world is recognised by Communists in words; but in their practical proposals there lurks the same confusion between the rights of the citizen and the rights of man, which Bentham pointed out long ago in criticising the French Declaration of Rights.

What becomes of this solidarity of interests between the workers of the world, when land nationalisation is taken to imply the absolute right of the existing inhabitants of a country, however they may originally have come there, to shut the door in the face of all the rest of mankind? On the other hand, where is the consistency between approving the Trade Unionist's indignation at "black-legs" and yet permitting the immigration of aliens? And if aliens are to be excluded because they may lower the rate of wages, how does that policy differ in principle from a policy of protective tariffs?—That it may differ very much in its actual effect on the majority of the population, there is not much doubt. A workman who perhaps calls himself a Sama Samajist, and who may even boast that he has outgrown patriotic prejudice, may be heard complaining that the Ceylon consumer buys articles of foreign make; he does not reflect that he is living on rice grown in Burma or in Brazil.

Starvation for a large number would be the speedy consequence of protection all round, whether enforced by law or by boycotting. We have not yet got beyond the nationalist stage of regarding

our social questions, and there is no use in talking as if patriotism, even in its narrower and meaner aspects, is likely to be an extinct sentiment for a long time to come. We must work up from the good elements in patriotism towards a wider tie. And we cannot get to a federation of the world all at once. Our citizens cannot yet be citizens of the world; we cannot afford to sink the citizen in the man. The difference between civilised and uncivilised races is a real barrier; and to try to ignore it, as Communists almost habitually do, is only to fall a prey to false and mischievous abstractions.

“Through having grown organically and from deep roots,” writes Rom Landau, in *We Have Seen Evil*, “the gains of man’s striving for a better life are more stable, and carry the life sap for the future. Gains resulting from violent upheavals are born in agony and at tremendous sacrifice. Yet when they prove of doubtful worth, they are discarded as if no price whatever had been paid for them.

“Looking back, we discover that man’s achievements are not due to chance, not a superstructure without foundations, but inherent in his nature, and in whatever qualities nations may have developed through long strivings. Already his ancestors carried within them the seeds of their future soundness.”

Revolution is often associated with hatred, violence and destruction. Destruction is, of course, necessary very often as a preliminary to subsequent construction. Therefore, destruction must be for the carrying out of a previously conceived plan of reconstruction; for the laying of ‘foundations’ for the pre-conceived ‘superstructure’; and then destruction becomes part of a whole which is constructive. For reconstruction there must be a practicable, constructive policy. Revolutionaries are actuated, usually without their own knowledge, by hatred, and not with policies which they hope to implement; the destruction of what they hate is their real purpose, and they are comparatively indifferent to the question of what is to come after it.

“The work of construction,” says Bertrand Russell, in *The Conquest of Happiness*, “is a greater source of happiness than destruction. Perhaps it would be more correct to say that those who find satisfaction in construction find in it greater satisfaction than the lovers of destruction can find in destruction, for, if once you have become filled with hate, you will not easily derive from construction the pleasure which another man would derive from it.

“ At the same time, few things are so likely to cure the habit of hatred as the opportunity to do constructive work of an important kind.

“ The satisfaction to be derived from success in a great constructive enterprise is one of the most massive that life has to offer, although, unfortunately, in its highest forms, it is open only to men of exceptional ability. Nothing can rob a man of the happiness of successful achievement in an important piece of work, unless it be the proof that, after all, his work was bad. There are many forms of such satisfaction. The man who, by a scheme of irrigation, has caused the wilderness to blossom like the rose, enjoys it in one of its most tangible forms. The creation of an organization may be a work of supreme importance. So is the work of those few statesmen who have devoted their lives to producing order out of chaos, of which Lenin is the supreme type in our day.”

Chapter VIII

THE ROAD BACK TO PEACE

IN the pathway the human race has to tread, the journey to the milestone of peace is the longest and the most beset with obstacles. The goal may be distant, but we must press on. In its eternal quest of happiness, mankind cannot by-pass this mile post.

There is no path to peace except as the will of peoples may open it. The way to peace is through agreement, not through force. The question, then, is not of any ambitious general scheme to prevent war, but simply of the constant effort, which is the highest task of statesmanship in relation to every possible cause of strife, to diminish among peoples the disposition to resort to force and to find a just and reasonable basis for accord.

If war is outlawed, other means of redress of injuries must be provided. Moreover, few, if any, intend to outlaw self-defence, a right still accorded to individuals under all systems of law. To meet this difficulty, the usual formula is limited to wars of aggression. But justification for war, as recently demonstrated, is ready at hand for those who desire to make war, and there is rarely a case of admitted aggression, or where on each side the cause is not believed to be just by the peoples who support the war.

There is a further difficulty that lies deeper. There is no law-giver for Independent States. There is no legislature to impose its will by majority vote, no executive to give effect even to accepted rules. Great Powers agreeing among themselves may indeed hold small Powers in check. But who will hold great Powers in check when they themselves disagree?

For a people who hold that might makes right, treaties will be mere scraps of paper. The Hague Peace Conference was expected to reform this state of mind, but devoted itself to revising the rules of war. The League of Nations, professing the same purpose, had no workable machinery and was continually shaken by bellicose elements in its membership. The vital reform to overcome this defect must proceed from within. It is not to be imposed from without, certainly not by an agency like the League of Nations wielding a bludgeon which, when applied, turned out to be nothing but a slapstick.

When our forefathers made Lanka their home, it was with the ideal of dwelling in this land in peace—peace amongst themselves and peace with other nations.

But what has been their destiny?—twenty-five centuries of almost incessant warfare. Look at Kelaniya, Anuradhapura, Sigiriya, Polonnaruwa, Yapahuwa, Dambadeniya, Gampola, Kotte, Sitawaka. What are they? Capitals of conquering or conquered kings, and scenes of strife and conflict, often fratricidal, monuments to conquest and carnage, plunder and pillage.

The Moving Finger writes ; and, having writ,
Moves on; nor all thy Piety nor Wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a line,
Nor all thy Tears wash out a word of it.

So says Omar Khayyam in his *Rubaiyat*. It has been our unfortunate destiny to write a part of that glorious history entrusted to us in blood. The quest was civilization and culture, prosperity and peace; the guerdon was conquest and carnage, plunder and pillage.

It is true that civilization painfully developed amidst the throes of warfare. There have been philosophers who preached that war has been the begetter, or at least the inseparable companion, of progress.

Even the poets have supported this monstrous theory. Byron, for example, celebrated the "Isles of Greece" as the consecrated region "where grew the arts of war and peace."

But, is it not certain that the "Arts of Peace" would have been ten thousandfold more if the "Arts of War" had not periodically wrecked and destroyed the works of peace?

The world, it is said, started with everything that was beautiful, dominating all that was ugly. Visionaries have always told us of realms beyond the physical where spirits, nature-spirits, and the like gambol with a freedom unknown to modern civilization—where everyday life is joy in its highest sense, and such things as strife and wars are unknown. If man would turn his thoughts inwards, instead of outward, then the inner happiness that is permanent would emerge, and become the key that unlocks the door to the kingdom where one sees with the eyes of a child, and where one understands the injunction to "be as little children" who know joy as their daily companion. Perhaps if man's thoughts could rest, even for a little while, at these levels, conflict and strife would become things of the past—anachronisms indeed.

Victory was never gained by strife. Success was never achieved by conflict. Happiness was never experienced through ill-feeling. Peace in the heart is conqueror of all opposing forces. It controls our life aright, guides us to the happy paths of success, prosperity and achievement of purpose. Never before in the history of the world are we in so great a need of peace from conflict, ill-feeling, and strife as we are today. Peace is needed not only in the world at large, but also in the home, business house and workshop. Without peace, no life, no home, office or other place of industry can succeed. When there is no peace in the heart the life without is all turmoil. The mental and physical energy that is wasted and used up in strife and conflict sadly deprives one's life of the necessary forces required to build up a successful and noble life—a thing of very great and important value to us.

The happy and successful life which we all yearn for cannot possibly be achieved if we wantonly waste our time and energy in conflict and strife. To have peace in our hearts we require to ban, forever from our lives, warfare of every description. The heart, once freed from such horrors, will immediately become the great and wise helper that it should be, instead of a hindrance.

It has been said that the "blinding flash" of the first atom bomb dropped on Hiroshima altered the whole course of world history. But the Light that "flashed and radiated" under that historic Bo-tree 2500 years ago was of greater moment to human destiny. It illuminated the way by which mankind could cross, from a world of superstition, of hatred and of fear, to a new world of light, of love and of happiness.

The Buddha led mankind to a new world twenty-five centuries ago. Atom bombs are utilised today, because man has gone astray from that world. Man, in acquiring increased control over the forces of nature without acquiring increased control over the forces of his own nature, is surely on the path to self-destruction and extinction. Those who are pondering over the havoc and holocaust caused to life and property by atom bombs do not yet realise that the foundations of their own life, upon which they have built their civilizations, their great cities, their social systems, their cathedrals, palaces and homes and hovels, are cracking beneath their feet.

The horrors of the Nazi concentration camps, the burning, by the British, of the Indonesian village of Bekassi, by pouring petrol on each of the one thousand timber houses and

knowledge, the necessity of purity, of courtesy, of uprightness, of peace, and of a Universal Love far-reaching, grown great and beyond measure." Morality, therefore, underlines all problems of social relationships.

Men, since the beginning of time, have sought peace. Various men through the ages have attempted to devise an international process to prevent or settle disputes between nations.

Military alliances, balance of power, leagues of nations—all in turn failed, leaving, as the only path open to man, the way of the crucible of war. The utter destructiveness of war now blots out this alternative. We have had our last chance. If we do not now devise some greater and more equitable system, universal destruction will be at our door.

The problem basically is moral, and involves a spiritual rejuvenation and improvement of human character that will synchronize with our almost matchless advance in science, literature and all material and cultural developments of the past 2,500 years. It must be of the spirit, if we are to save the flesh.

One need not be a religionist to realise that much of our present evil is rooted in our failure to practise the humble virtue of *Maitri*. This is the one essential sustenance to support the traveller on the Path. Gautama Buddha himself has said that, although in his search for Truth, the main Perfection he cultivated was Charity (*Dāna Pāramitā*), the main Perfection that the next Buddha will cultivate will be—simple loving kindness, the dearness of brother to brother, mutual tenderness and tolerance (*Maitri Pāramitā*).

The Buddhist duty of Universal Love, *Maitri*, is much more far-reaching than the corresponding duty as commonly conceived in any other religion. It enfolds, in its ample embrace, not only "thy brethren and thy sisters," not only "thy neighbours," not only "thy enemies," but everything that has life. We cannot, of course, define *Maitri*. It is one of those abstract words, like life and consciousness, which convey a definite idea in practice, but the essence of which is beyond the grasp of the finite mind. All such words relate to forces that are non-dimensional and non-temporal. We know nothing of them except in so far as we recognize their expression in this world of desires and of sensory experience. Wherefore the best we can do is to take the highest expression of love on this plane of self-ridden existence and infer from what we lack.

There is no need for us to attempt any picture of this highest expression for ourselves, as the Buddha has already done it fully

and comprehendingly. And if we take his list of the attributes and test ourselves by it, we shall have to admit that we cannot find such love in ourselves, nor have we ever recognized it in others. To love like that demands an absolute selflessness, and which of us is capable of it? This ideal love is all-giving and not all-taking, and it is giving without the least ulterior thought of any return or reward whatever, either in this or any other world to come.

The Buddha does not want a suppression of emotion and desire but asks for the cultivation of true love for all beings. This glowing emotion must fill the whole universe and result in an outflow of abounding goodwill. Love, universal love, is the remedy for all the ills that afflict mankind, but it is rightly and fully practised only when we can say with the Master: "Our mind shall not waver; no vile speech will we utter; we will abide tender and compassionate, loving in heart, void of secret malice; and we will be ever suffusing such a one with the rays of our loving thought, and from him forthgoing, we will be ever suffusing the whole world with thought of love far-reaching, grown great and beyond measure, void of ill-will and bitterness." (*Majjhima Nikaya*).

In the Buddha's scheme of ethics, the spirit of love is more important than good works. "All good works whatever are not worth one-sixteenth part of love which sets free the heart. Love which sets free the heart comprises them. It shines, gives light and radiance."

One of the most beautiful sayings in the Pitakas typifies the supreme virtue of *Maitri* by mother-love, the foundation of all love in the world: "As a mother at the risk of her life protects her own child, her only child, so also let everyone cultivate goodwill towards all beings." (*Metta Sutta*).

Then again: "Let a man cultivate goodwill without measure—unhindered Love and Kindness—toward the whole world, above, below, around. Standing, walking, sitting or lying, let him be firm in this mind so long as he is awake; this state of heart is the highest condition." But having admitted that such perfection is beyond our attainment, we must go back a step and inquire where we go astray. If, for example, we are incapable of loving "all beings," are we capable of feeling any approximation to such a love as this for any one being; wife, husband, child, father, mother brother, sister, friend, dependant or employee?

It may sound absurd to speak of "Love and Kindness toward the whole world" in a world mad with strife; and loving a brother

man, we know, is not easy these days, especially when one meets so many unlovable ones. But then we remember that, according to the teaching of the Buddha:

The ugliness we see in others
Is a reflection of our own nature.

A man's individual life, circumstances and world are a reflection of his own thoughts and beliefs. All men are mirrors reflecting according to their own surface. All men, looking at the world of men and things, are looking into a mirror which gives back their own reflection. Then there are the words ascribed to R. L. Stevenson:

There is so much good in the worst of us,
And so much bad in the best of us,
That it ill behoves any one of us,
To find any fault with the rest of us.

Even a rose has flaws. But why examine the flaws when you can pay homage to its beauty? And then there are these lines of Bolton Hall:

I looked at my Brother with the Microscope of Criticism,
And I said, "How coarse my Brother is!"
I looked at him through the Telescope of Scorn
And I said, "How small my Brother is!"
Then I looked in the Mirror of Truth
And I said, "How like me my Brother is."

These thoughts help us tremendously.

Each individual lives in an individual world of his own creating. Whatever is in the mind is reflected into the circle of surrounding life and circumstances, thus making up man's little individual world, and in his circumstances he beholds a reflection of his own character and inner thought-life. Until man understands that his individual world and circumstances are but the effect of his own thought-life and beliefs, he remains a victim of circumstances. When, however, he realizes this great truth, he will become free.

Man is false and deceitful, not merely in relation to others, but to himself as well. We project the 'evil within us' on to an innocent fellow man, and vent our hatred on that person. We adopt ideas not always out of pure and disinterested motives, but through

some kind of resentment or failure in life. We become vindictive and tyrannical because our pride has been wounded, or our love has been unrequited, or because we have had some humiliating physical deformity. The remarkable thing about man is that he often deceives himself.

"As we think, so we act." It is by our thoughts of life that our way of life is greatly determined. Here deep-seated instinct plays a large part. Goethe tells us that "the fundamental motives of people's instincts are of three kinds: self-preservation, the rearing of children, and the giving to them the best possible care. Beyond these limits no man goes, whatever he may pretend."

It is true that the struggle for self-preservation, the rearing of children, and the caring for them really do constitute the motives of a great part of the world's labour. However, those ambitions—if such they could be called—fail to go beyond ourselves. It is difficult to believe that no man goes beyond that. Our interest in a community may be partly to protect ourselves in pursuing our private ends, but there are those who do so unselfishly, and with an earnest desire to help the community as a community, and mankind as a whole. Most scientists are known to be almost entirely unselfish; some, risking, and even giving, their lives in the interest of their scientific research.

Self-preservation, the rearing of children, and the proper care of them have even been forsaken in the determination to give to the world a new science or invention. The biographies of many of our great men and women bear this out. The scientific urge has taken them out of themselves and enlarged their minds. Such men and women are no longer bent on personal advantages. We find brave spirits like Madame Curie, working in poverty in a garret laboratory in Paris, maintaining her home and children by means of her own labour, that she might develop her theory, and give her discovery of radium to the world.

The ethical view of life is one that springs from ideas, which form the standpoint from which we look at ourselves and society about us, rather than from our natural instincts, or our knowledge of the world as it is. However we explain it, there lies the foundation of philosophy. It all sums up to the fact that as a man thinks, so he is. Truth between man and man, justice in the State, love and brotherhood in society, these all have a value in our eyes quite out of proportion to the extent to which they actually exist.

Science is a study of things. Ethics is a study of ideals. One is a study of what is; the other a study of what should be. One is

forced to ask why the actual fails to correspond with the ideal. It is not a case of corresponding; it is a matter of selection between an ethical view of life and our inherited primitive savage instincts. One can have but one supreme thought at one time; one or just such another must predominate.

In 1893, two years before his death, T. H. Huxley delivered the Romanes Lecture in the University of Oxford. *Evolution and Ethics* was the title he gave to his lecture, his last major contribution to knowledge. He said that man's mentality is dual in its action. At one moment its action is *Ethical*. This we may call the good or virtuous constituent of human nature. Then at another moment, when directed towards a fellow being, its action is reversed; it becomes *Cosmic*; friendship turns to enmity. We must note first the definition Huxley gave to ethics: "to furnish us with a reasoned rule of life; to tell us what is right action and why it is so." Later he speaks of "the ethical ideal of the just and the good." We must note, too, his conception of the ethical process; "I have termed this evolution... (of) the organized and personified sympathy we call conscience, the ethical process." With the evolution of conscience, ethical man made his first appearance. The "cosmic process, on the other hand, is represented by the action of those qualities best fitted for giving survival" in the evolutionary struggle: it includes man's "ape and tiger traits, which are not reconcilable with sound ethical principles." "The cosmos works through the lower nature of man, not for righteousness, but against it." Huxley regarded the ethical process as the antagonist of the cosmical process; the cosmic process had brought about the evolution of man; then the ethical process, becoming dominant, brought man's physical evolution to an end!

Spencer, like Huxley, regarded the cosmical code as antagonistic to the ethical. "That is not necessarily so; not even usually so," declares Sir Arthur Keith, the great anthropologist, in his *Essays on Human Evolution*. "As a matter of fact there is no more opposition" he says, "between the ethical and cosmical codes than between the Home Office and Foreign Office of a Government; the one reacts on the other. The effect of their combined activity determines a nation's evolutionary path and destiny."

Spencer regarded our mental subserviency to the dual code as of recent origin; the code has been practised and ultimately grafted into our inherited nature. He was confident that the cosmical code would die out and that the ethical code would be left in sole control of our actions. Sir Arthur Keith, on the other hand,

looked on the brain-mechanism which subserves the dual code as of extreme antiquity, for it is obeyed instinctively by social animals low in the animal scale ; it is deeply entrenched in human nature. Man's emotions, his feelings, and his inherited predispositions are so contrived as to make him responsive to its behests. It is true that man differs from all other social animals in having reason, and therefore can strive to control his actions. It is just when we apply our reason to the dual code, and seek to reduce it to a single ethical code, that religion begins.

Religion is ethics; and ethics is religion. Religion and ethics are inseparable. In Buddhism, no "link" between ethics and religion is necessary, and the problem of finding that fatal missing link in the modern world does not exist. Buddhist philosophy and the questions of human conduct are inseparable, as Hindu and Christian philosophy are inseparable from the knowledge of God.

An ethical view of life should carry with it a sense of vocation. We should feel that we are here not to do as we please, but to do that which is best for the greatest number and for posterity. We should feel held in something that we must keep in remembrance. In virtue of it there are some things which we may not do because they would harm others. It is not enough for a man to be comfortable; he must ask if right is being done in the world. The mere act of meditating and piously wishing: "May all beings be well and happy," gives no comfort or help even to a single other person, and he himself is self-deceived into the belief that he is a benevolent being. The nurse who ministers to the sick and suffering is doing a far greater service to herself and to society, than the recluse who spends his life in rigid isolation.

Every man is a part of the world of men, and is responsible for what goes on in it. He must be concerned as to whether or not society is becoming more humanised. He must ask what he himself is doing to bring about a better order of things. This is the ethical view by which life takes on a serious aspect and an incentive. Such a life is the really happy life. Then we become commendably, constructively discontented with the present order of things, and proceed happily to do something about it.

He knows that to bring about this Golden Age men's thoughts, men's desires, and their aspirations must be changed. He knows, too, it can be done.

As he looks back over the long pages of history, he sees that men have traversed and come out of the darkness ; they have evolved

from barbarism. As he turns to the future, he sees a golden glow that tells him good is nearer to men than they dream it is. He knows it is theirs for the taking; for the forsaking of barbarism for ethics. He understands, at last, that the ethical view of life makes men look for good and guides them to it. He is filled with a new hope that has become the habit of his mind, and he knows that his hopes—because they are ethical hopes, unselfish, and for the good of all mankind—will be fulfilled.

The apparent harshness of the law of inflexible causation in the moral world is relieved by the vision of the progress which has already been made under its operation.

The doctrine of evolution has killed the old idea of the "Fall of Man" and his redemption by supernatural aid. In place of that primitive conception, it has given us the outline of a slow development from the primitive to the civilized man, and points the way to a continuation of that development to still higher levels.

When one rises above the narrow-circle of present-day conditions, and looks backward, over the course of human history, to the remote days when man became first distinguished from the brute, one gains an impressive sense of the moral as well as the intellectual advance which has been achieved in the interval.

At first the rate of progress was slow, but each step upward seemed to make the next more easy. Stained as the early pages of the human story are with blood, cruelty and lust, they show clearly enough how the race, by its own efforts, struggled out of the slough of savagery to the uncertain ground of barbarism, and later, with the aid of arts and sciences, established itself on the firm ground of an elementary civilization.

Rightly read, that story is far more inspiring than the conceptions of supernaturalism. It proves the reality of progress—progress which each generation inherits from its predecessor, carries a step further, and hands down in its improved form to its successor. Thus the effect of progress is cumulative, as we see in the more rapid rate of advance recorded in recent centuries compared with the Stone Age and even less remote periods. Moreover, in the earlier stages man was not conscious of his destiny. Now, thanks to his knowledge of, and mastery over, Nature, social evolution has become, as it were, self-conscious. We understand the processes which have made us what we are, and we know that we can, to a great extent, create our environment on the lines that make for further progress.

And then we must never forget that the greatest event in natural history was the birth of conscience in the human mind. That was the moment when man put aside his strongest natural instinct, which was self-interest. Until that moment, he had considered only his own pleasure and security. But the new man with a conscience was capable of giving his life for something else, for someone else. In mastering his animal, selfish instincts, man found his religion and evolution acquired a moral future. By continuing to govern those instincts wisely, mankind will advance nearer to a state of true civilization.

Comrades, let us link Love and Kindness, plant these deep in the soil of the human heart, and a new heaven and earth will blossom not only for us but for the generations that will come after us. Some of you may possibly object that this plea is too extravagant, too fantastic for men to consider—to expect Love and Kindness among common men struggling for food and security. But at such times let us cast our eyes back on the long and precipitous ascent that our fellow men have already traversed out of darkness, and we will be filled with wonder at the steepes they have surmounted.

“One of the best sermons I have ever heard,” says Bruce Barton, “was delivered by a country preacher in a little country church. He said: ‘People talk to me about the problem of evil, but I will tell you an even greater problem: the problem of goodness. How do you account for the fact that in such a world as this there should be so much self-sacrifice, so much unselfishness, so much love? By what miracle has man, who only a few thousand years ago was living on the level of the beasts, risen to a point where he will, literally, lay down his life for his family, for a cause, for a friend’.”

If, through Love and Kindness, this much has been possible, what future impossibilities need be feared? If we have come thus far by reason of the strange “light” within us, may we not, impelled by the same intangible force, struggle yet higher toward the very Face of Light?

Chapter IX

WHAT IS LIFE FOR ?

FOR what purpose, one asks oneself, is this so imperative, so invincible, so all-compassing an impulse to exist even for a passing hour ? Or what is the attraction of being over not being, of life in the crowded and warring world, which makes it worth the turmoil and the hardship, the anxiety and ceaseless strife ? In what consists the satisfaction of an ant's existence, of a worm's or a crocodile's, we can form no conception. To account for our own passionate attachment to living is not easy.

All the questions man asks about his life are multiplied by the fact of death ; for man differs from all other creatures, it would seem, in being aware of his own death, and in never being fully reconciled to sharing the natural fate of all living organisms. The tree of knowledge, with its apple that gave man awareness of good and evil, also grew a more bitter fruit man wrenched from its branches : the consciousness of the shortness of the individual life and the universality of death. In his resistance to death man has often achieved a maximum assertion of life ; like a child at the sea's edge, working desperately to build up the walls of his sand castle before the next wave breaks over it, man has often made death the centre of his most valued efforts, cutting temples out of the rock, heaping pyramids high above the desert, building churches with spires aspiring to the heavens, and thus translating, as it were, the ache and longing of human brief concepts of beauty into everlasting stone.

Death happens to all living things, but man alone has created, out of the constant threat of death, a will-to-endure. And out of the desire for continuity and immortality in all their many conceivable forms, man has created religions, which, in their turn, have attempted to give a more meaningful end to life.

For the Hindu this end is "to be one with Brahma" or to be "re-absorbed in the divine essence from which he sprang"; for the Jew, Christian and Mohammedan, it is to "glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever." Although life in these ultimate havens of religion is said to be much happier than life here, the average Hindu, Jew, Christian or Mohammedan will never willingly give up his life to go to these heavens. And the Buddhist, for whom the best is not to be born, is also in the same company, for he, too, clings to earthly existence.

The Greeks had a story of a Phrygian king who sought for long to capture the satyr Silenus, wise, it was said, with supernatural knowledge. At length in the king's gardens in Macedonia, where grew the most fragrant roses in all the world, the satyr was taken, and brought before the monarch, who put to him the question of questions—"What is best and most desirable for men"? For long Silenus was silent. At last, to obtain his release, with bitter laughter he replied—"O wretched race of a day, children of chance and misery, why do ye compel me to say to you what it were most expedient for you not to hear? What is best for all is for ever beyond your reach; not to be born, not to be, to be nothing. The second best for you, however, is soon to die." *Optimum non nasci aut cito mori.*

So the great solution to our problem would be: "What is best for all is not be born." But every day two million human beings are born into the world. There are two thousand million human beings today. The world adds fifty thousand souls a day to its population. During the last century the population of the world has doubled itself. Asia is "an ant-heap of men." The population of Japan has doubled within the last sixty years, and is now increasing at the rate of a million annually. India's population rises by six millions annually, and two hundred thousand are added to the population of our own little Island every year.

What is the significance of all this? Into what catastrophe what dark forest of disillusionment are we heading? Wise men say "The best for all is not to be born"; but, no matter whether there is famine or plenty, sorrow or rejoicing, war or peace, we are born—it is birth, birth, birth all the time. Like a huge Rotary printing machine ejecting a regular stream of printed and folded newspapers, the destiny of the human race would seem to be to produce an endless procession of babies. It is, as the Sinhalese villager says: "Tread the mat and a child is born," or, as Chinese women put it, "Others gave birth to us and we give birth to others; what else are we to do?"

There is an explosive philosophy in this saying: "Others gave birth to us and we give birth to others." Life becomes a constructive and destructive biological procession. If during the next century also the population of the world doubles itself, there will then be 4,000,000,000 mouths for the Good Earth to feed. Now, with a population of only 2,000,000,000, there is widespread famine and starvation. In the world of living things, hunger and sex are the central facts. If hunger were not satisfied sex would

perish, and if sex were not satisfied there could be no creatures to be hungry. Both are explosive forces, but they are constructive as well as destructive. They cause havoc, and yet they create life.

Life scatters its seed like dust. Its fecundity is its mainstay, and the accompanying waste appalling. The herring produces forty thousand eggs a year, the tape-worm a hundred million. If all the eggs that are eaten today are hatched, man will be forced to yield the earth to their multitudinous brood. The plain truth is that there is not room upon the earth for a tithe of the creatures desiring to possess it, and, but for the most drastic destruction, the world could not contain the living things it engenders. Famine, drought, pestilence, and especially the war of species upon species, preserve the balance. The infant mortality of the human race, prodigious as it has been, could not of itself suffice to check its increase beyond all bounds.

Primitive people commonly sacrificed their children that the tribe might survive. We think this expedient inhuman and prefer to prevent their coming to birth. Civilized man finds himself between the "devil and the deep sea." If he abuses his sexual desires, or suppresses them, or even over-controls them, he brings to an end both his civilization and his nation. If he leads the life of a libertine, or even exercises his normal powers to the full, his civilization will crash from a surplus of population. One thing is beyond debate. Only by interference with Nature can you hope to provide room or sustenance for the multitudes which would otherwise cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

And what are the hopes and expectations of this perpetual, swollen, rushing stream of life? This cascade of new life endlessly pouring upon the earth, these millions, desire food, shelter, comfort and security; or in the language of the American Declaration of Independence, "Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." The question that faces every man born into this world then is, not what should be his purpose of life, but just what to do with life, a life given to him for a period of, on an average, fifty to sixty years? The answer that he should order his life so that he could find the greatest happiness in it is a more practical question than speculation on the metaphysical proposition of the mystic purpose of life.

The situation then would seem to be this; man wants to live, and he wants to live happily, but he still must live upon this earth. "All questions of living in heaven," says Dr. Lin Yutang in *The Importance of Living*, "must be brushed aside. Let not the spirit take wings and soar to the abode of the gods and forget the earth.

Are we not mortals, condemned to die? The span of life vouchsafed us, three score years and ten, is short enough, if the spirit gets too haughty and wants to live for ever, but, on the other hand, it is also long enough, if the spirit is a little humble. One can learn such a lot and enjoy such a lot in seventy years, and three generations is a long, long time to see human follies and acquire wisdom. Anyone who is wise and has lived long enough to witness the changes of fashion and morals and politics, through the rise and fall of three generations, should be perfectly satisfied to, rise from his seat and go away, saying, 'it was a good show' when the curtain falls."

However unconsciously, the effort towards social amelioration implies what we can only call a religious faith. In words, the social reformer may disclaim any religious belief, and may argue that one of the main causes of the growth of Socialism and kindred tendencies is that decay in religious belief which is often said to be one of the prominent features of our time. In particular, it is often said that the disappearance of belief in the compensations of another life is one of the principal sources of the eagerness with which immediate and earthly justice is demanded. But, in the first place, it is important to recognise that, as Professor Wallace in his *Hegel's Philosophy of Mind* has expressed it: "The religion of a time is not its nominal creed, but its dominant conviction of the meaning of reality, the principle which animates all its being and all its striving, the faith it has in the laws of nature, and the purpose of life."

In the second place, the diminished importance of "other-worldly" considerations is only one aspect of a change which has been going on within, as well as without, the visible boundaries of each established religion. Few moralists nowadays venture to stake the obligation to morality upon the sanctions of future reward and punishment. Like Plato in the *Republic*, they would rather put aside such sanctions altogether, aware of the demoralising manner in which they have often been conceived, until the superiority of justice to injustice has been shown through considerations of social well-being; and the hope of continued existence is based mainly, if not solely, upon the independently established facts of morality.

Not only in Kant and those whom he has influenced, but in the poets who have taught the Christians a great deal of their theology—in Tennyson and Browning—we find "the hope of immortality" based mainly on the inadequacy between man's ideal and what he

can accomplish in his short span of earthly life. To recall Davis' famous lines :

What is this life if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare ?

No time to stand beneath the boughs
And stare as long as sheep and cows.

No time, to see, when woods we pass,
Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass.

No time to see, in broad daylight,
Streams full of stars, like skies at night.

No time to turn at Beauty's glance,
And watch her feet, how they can dance.

No time to wait till her mouth can
Enrich that smile her eyes began.

A poor life this if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.

The hope of immortality has become one aspect of the desire for progress.

On the other hand practically all the progress that man has made is due to the fact that he is mortal. If man knew that his days on earth were to be endless, all incentive to bestir himself—except to seek food and clothing—would be lost. There would be no desire to make his mark in the world: no stimulating ambition to leave the world a little better than he found it ; no hungry aspiration to be remembered after he is dead. If there were no death, life would become a thing stagnant, monotonous and unspeakably burdensome.

There is a tradition that the Romans had an institution for repressing the tendency of successful Generals to put on airs of omnipotence. In a Roman triumphal procession, the victorious General, attired in a gold-embroidered robe and flowered tunic, and bearing in one hand a laurel bough and in the other a sceptre, stood upright in a circular chariot drawn by four horses, and behind him was stationed a slave who, amidst the popular acclamations, kept continually dinning into his private ear that he was but mortal, by repeating the words, 'Remember, you die.'

Centuries ago there came to be put together a little address by a Buddhist Thero called Sabhiya of Rajagaha, the first mother-settlement of Buddhism in the Ganges valley. He, a tireless teacher, was talking to schismatic bhikkhus, seeking to bring them into peaceful ways. His talk got set in verse, *Thera Gatha*, or 'Psalms of the Brethren'; it was easier to remember verse when you never wrote down your thoughts. Among them there is one which runs thus:

People can never really understand
That we are here but for a little spell.
But they who grasp this truth indeed
Suffer all strife and quarrels to abate.

The sentiment of this verse recalls those words of that famous savant, Henri Bergson, who once said: "Yes, that death in which we do not really believe, why do I say that? Because if we really believed that we should each of us die, we should act so differently from what we do!"

Life is a unique experience. There is nothing with which to compare it, no measure of its value in terms of some other thing, and money will not purchase it. Yet with this "priceless pearl" we know not what to do. "Man's chief end," the Christians are taught, "is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him for ever": We contemplate eternity without horror, and find an hour of our own society intolerable. That mortals should desire immortality and yet find difficulty in passing an afternoon—if you have a fancy for paradoxes, here is a pretty one.

This craving for immortality (*vibhava-tanha*), which the Buddha in His first discourse said was one of the causes of suffering, is sometimes put forward by the Christians as an argument in support of a future supermundane existence. But this "instinctive desire," which so strongly possesses the mind of man, for a life beyond the grave, is easily accounted for by reference to that instinct of self-preservation which is proverbially "the first law of Nature," and is common to all physical organisms, from man downwards to the lowest order of animal life.

Man, however, recognizes the fact that his physical organism must perish; but, in the egotism of his manhood, he rebels against the thought of dying as the brute dieth. He looks upon himself as the crowning glory of physical Nature. He counts and measures

the steps of his evolution from the primordial germ, compares the brief span of his existence with the aeons which have been consumed in his production, and concludes that somehow he has been cheated, by dissembling Nature, of his fair proportion of time and opportunity. At first he rebels against being classed as a lineal descendant of the lowest organisms; but the steps of his evolution are too plainly defined in the structure of his predecessors, his pedigree is too clearly written in that of his own, to admit of rational doubt.

Compelled to own his relationship to the rest of animated Nature, he finds consolation in the thought that, whilst he may be a product of evolution, he is no longer subject to its laws. He is the product of a process. He is like a machine, which is produced by means of a great variety of processes, but is emancipated from all connections with those employed in its construction the moment it is completed and sent out into the world to perform its functions. Thus, it is argued, is man emancipated from the processes of his evolution, and placed upon the apex of Nature, from which point his only means of further progress is by flight into a Utopian heaven where the object of his creation can be accomplished.

With such assumptions does man console himself for his obvious relationship to his fellow worms, and for his lack of time in this life to work out what he fondly conceives to be his mission and destiny. He ignores, or denies, the fact that the same processes of evolution which produced him are still at work in himself and in all his environment, the same survival of the fittest, though modified by the state of his progress in civilization; the same struggle for life, though modified by the element of an enforced altruism, if such a term is admissible, which compels the inclusion of his race in the object of his struggle. He forgets, too, that the same element, which he is pleased to term altruism in himself, is common to many of the lower animals; and that his longing for a future life may be traced to that instinct of self-preservation which he possesses in common with all animated, nay all organic, Nature and without which the world would soon be depopulated.

Goethe does not believe that immortality involves the acceptance of a Utopian heaven, and, like the Buddha, he urges that if such a heaven existed, as many Christians imagine it to be, it would not be a place of salvation, but a mere transfiguration of the trivialities of this world. Thus Goethe prefers to be counted

among the Sadducees, who, the Christian scriptures say, held that there is no resurrection from the dead. Goethe says:

A Sadducee I'll be fore'er,
For it would drive me to despair.
If the Philistines who now cramp me
Would cripple my eternity,
'Twould be the same old fiddle-faddle,
In heaven we'd have celestial twaddle.

"Toying with ideas of immortality," said the aged Goethe, "is for the genteel classes and for women, especially who have nothing else to do. But a capable man who has something to think about, here and now, and who must daily struggle, fight, and act, lets the future world take care of itself and is active and useful in this one."

In *The Riddle of the Universe* Haeckel definitely pronounced against the idea of immortality, in the following words: "The belief in the immortality of the soul is a dogma in hopeless contradiction with the most solid empirical truths of modern science." Professor Tyndall considered the belief a "base delusion," and Huxley that the subject was not even worth discussing, as about it "we do know nothing and can know nothing."

Haeckel has a large following today, who consider, as he did, that the belief in immortality is wholly inconsistent with the facts of evolution and of physiology. They argue that each one of us was at the beginning of our existence a simple globule of protoplasm in which there is no place for the soul, that all organisms descend from possibly a single primitive form, which developed out of lifeless matter by spontaneous generation. The Buddha denied the substantial nature and eternal persistence of the individual psyche. He said: "As an unintelligent man seeks for the abode of music in the body of the lute, so does he look for a soul within the *skandhas*", (the material and psychic aggregates, of which the individual mind-body is composed).

Huxley teaches a method of intellectual honesty. He says: "Give me such evidence as would justify me in believing anything else, and I will believe that (*i.e.*, man's immortality). It is no use to talk to me of analogies and probabilities. I know what I mean when I say I believe in the law of the inversed square, and I will not rest my life and my hopes upon weaker convictions." Huxley has also said: "The most sacred act of man's life is to say

and to feel 'I believe such and such to be true.' All the greatest rewards, and all the heaviest penalties of existence, cling upon that act."

Theologians used to be very puzzled to fix the exact time at which the soul was planted in the body. Was it at the moment of conception, or of birth, or later? The impossibility of answering this question, when we have to deal with a being showing an uninterrupted growth from an amoeba-like animal up to adult man, is an indication that the theory of an independent soul raises more difficulties than it removes.

The question naturally arises: At what stage in the development of the animal forms is it assumed that the immortality of the individual soul was introduced? Is it a prerogative of man only? But if so, had Neanderthal man, or Pithecanthropus an immortal soul? Has an ape, or even an elephant, a dog, a tiger, a chicken, a serpent, a fish, an oyster, each an individual, immortal soul? Where can we possibly draw the line? And where in space are these enormous numbers of individual souls continuing their immortal existence?

Man has no soul; rather, his acts are of such a nature that we characterize them as minded or spiritual. If there is no thing, no entity, which corresponds to the soul, then there can be no immortality of the soul. This necessitates the abandonment of the conception of a place where souls go after death. The claim that the soul should continue to exist after the decay of the body and its organs—by the processes of which it was produced—is so contrary to all reason that it cannot be dealt with as a scientific problem. The Buddha did not hold up before the eyes of his followers heaven or any other reward save Nirvana, the peace of mind obtainable by the self-forgetful activity of the Noble Eightfold Path.

The good Buddhist cannot seek for any salvation which he is himself to enjoy in any future world. The result of his good actions, the fruit of his Karma, as the Buddhist would call it, will survive when he is dead, and advance the happiness of some other being or beings. But, so far as he can reach salvation, he must reach it in this present world; he must enjoy it in this present life. Buddhist teaching constantly inveighs against the foolishness of wasting time, when there is so much to do, both for one's self and for others, in any hankering after a supposed happiness of heaven.

Man has the seeds of immortality in him, but the gift is for the race, not for the individual. "Man displays perhaps his most remarkable and his most unselfish genius," declares Dr. Lin Yutang, "when he turns from the thought of individual immortality and finds inspiration in the immortality of the human race. The more we concentrate upon the immortality of mankind, strangely enough the richer becomes our own individual life. It is sufficient that when we die, the work we leave behind us continues to influence others and play a part, however small, in the life of the community in which we live. We can pluck the flower and throw its petals to the ground, and yet its subtle fragrance remains in the air. It is a better, more reasonable and more unselfish kind of immortality."

The Buddha said: "Man's body turns to dust, but his influence persists," *Rūpaṃ jīrati maccānaṃ namagottaṃ na jīrati* (*Samyutta Nikāya*). The influence of the good life is oftentimes more far-reaching, more potent than when the living body held it within limits. It can be likened to a stone dropped into a still pool. The little waves it makes go on and on and on, to the very limits of the pool. Magnify the size of the stone and suppose it to be a gigantic meteor falling upon the earth. The changes in the earth's contour, due to the meteor's impact, remain throughout the ages a permanent monument to that meteor. We think thoughts inspired by those whose mortal bodies have long become dust. In our accomplishments, they also have a part. Because of them, we are. How can we say they are dead when every living person on this earth is a composite of all his ancestors who have gone before him?

Biological immortality or the continued existence of the germ structure of man, the immortality of influence or the continued effect of one's influence after his body has died, and the immortality of the group or the continuation of the whole of which each individual is for a time a part, are positions taken by modern thinkers also. Read Mr. Strachey's account of Florence Nightingale and you will see that her influence is immortal. Many thousands, nay, millions, of good women have led lives of self-forgetfulness and self-sacrifice; and their works have ceased with them. But Florence Nightingale's influence lives on, and has inspired thousands of others to labour in the same great cause.

In 1874, Sarah Bernhardt, the famous actress, was advised to give up acting if she wished to live, but she returned to the theatre as soon as she was able to leave her bed. When she was asked

by an admirer what gift he could send her, she replied, "They say I am to die; so you may send me a coffin." For the remainder of her life this coffin never left her side, even during her travels. She had a trestle made on which it stood at the end of her bed, so she could see it without effort, on awakening. "To remind me that my body will soon be dust and that my glory alone will live for ever," she explained.

Modern science teaches that it is function which creates the organ, and, *vice versa*, the organ is but the visible result of innumerable former functions. This may be considered as a modern restatement of the theory of *Sankharas* in the Buddhist doctrine of *Paticca Samuppada*, "Dependent Origination." All the seeings of ancestral eyes continue to live in our eyes. Our ancestors are not dead; they continue to exist; their influence persists; and by ancestors the Buddhist understands not only progenitors, but all those who have contributed to the progress of civilization. The Buddha said to His father, that not he and his fathers, the Kings of the Sakyas, but the race of the Buddhas, the Buddhas of former ages, were His ancestry.

Abraham Lincoln stated accurately the principles of the continuance of one's existence, and the persistence of one's influence, after the body has died, in this single passage:

"Fellow citizens, we cannot escape history, we of this Congress and of this administration will be remembered in spite of ourselves. No personal significance or insignificance can spare one or another of us. The fiery trial through which we pass will light us, in honour or dishonour, to the latest generation."

"*We cannot escape history*" ; "*We will be remembered in spite of ourselves*" ; "*Light us... to the latest generation*" ; the effect is practically eternal, through effects producing further effects. Lincoln might have said in 1862: "The sounds which I am uttering now vanish apparently into thin air, yet they persist into eternity. If we had a scientific apparatus delicate and sensitive enough to catch and record these sound waves, which we don't, we might find that these sounds stretch into the eternity of space. Similarly, with our moral actions."

In this very real sense, we may say that the heroes and sages and poets of every race are still living among us. As we link ourselves to these martyrs and thinkers we come to share the wisest thoughts, the noblest ideals, the imperishable music of the centuries.

What if their bodies are dead, since "body" is nothing but an abstract generalization for a constantly changing combination of chemical constituents! Man begins to see his own life as a drop in an ever-flowing river and is glad to contribute his part to the great stream of life. If he were only a little less selfish, he should be quite contented with that.

The natural span of man's existence contains enough to make this life a prize worth living for. We have within us a greed of life, an urgent craving for immortality (*vibhava-tanha*). That longing, which lies at the very root of the Christian religion, we Buddhists look upon as a sin of the flesh—one to be conquered and suppressed. It is a vice akin to avarice. With its suppression comes a peace which only those who have felt it can realize.

Life for so many people is empty and unsatisfying. Men realize that they are caught in a trap of their own making. They wish to free themselves, but do not know how. The cry goes up continually. "What is Life for?" The scientists answer:

"Has life Purpose? What, or where, or when?

Out of space came Universe, came Sun,

Came Earth, came Life, came Man, and more must come.

But as to Purpose; Whose or Whence? Why, None."

The scientists and psychologists have widened our horizons, but they have not given us a purpose. Only religion can do that, and it needs to be a religion that is at once logically sound and inspiring in its *motif*. Buddhism fulfils these conditions, for it satisfies man's most profound and lofty aspirations, and yet bears the strain of everyday life and helps him in his contact with his fellow men. Few religions can bear such a strain. The great test of a religion is how far its philosophy can be applied to man's human problems. Yet these human problems are cosmic, for man is himself a cosmos. The cry of man's heart for a purpose is the dim recognition of this fact. When a man feels his divine nature quickening to life in his human everyday self, he no longer cries for a purpose of life, for he realises that he is himself that very purpose: "Thou art thyself the object of thy search." Goethe has said it in the cold sentence: "Let us seek nothing behind the phenomena; they themselves are the lesson."

For the first time in the history of the human race, men and women are beginning to think for themselves in the realm of religion. No longer are they meekly accepting the element of dogma in "sacred"

books, which, in its entirety, is based on old unprovable traditions. They are thinking. And as they think, and as they study, they are discovering that the course of human history is determined, not by what happens in the skies, but by what takes place in the hearts of men ; that God is not in the skies but operating right here, and operating entirely outside of the Church. "Why stand we here," enquired Blake, "trembling around, calling on God for help, and not ourselves in whom God dwells?"

The Buddha said that there is no God higher than the perfect man. Remember that Christ was crucified on the charge of blasphemy. If the dogmas of Christianity have any meaning at all, they proclaim this central truth of all genuine religion, that the Deity is revealed in humanity; God is nothing more nor less than those eternal conditions of being which beget man—*i.e.*, the rational and morally aspiring being. Christ is God's equal. God is the Father, Christ is the Son ; and the Son and the Father are one. In a word, the significance of Christianity is that God reveals himself in the perfect man. The ideal of human perfection is identical with true divinity.

Man was not created in the image of God, but God in the image of Man. The consciousness of God is nothing but the consciousness of human-kind. Man can and must raise himself above the limitations of his individuality, but he cannot raise himself above the laws and principal characteristics of his kind. Man can think, imagine, feel and love as an absolute divine being, which means as a human being.

Religion is man's first self-consciousness. This makes it sacred; but what Christianity senses as the first (*i.e.* God) is actually the second. Since God is but the objectified essence of man, that which Christianity postulates as secondary (*i.e.* man) should be recognized as first. Love to man must not be derivative, it must be primary. Only then will love become the true, sacred and dependable force. If human essence is the highest essence of man, then love to man practically must be the supreme and first law of man. *Homo homini deus est*, such is the highest practical basis and the turning point of world history. Justice, truth, goodness have their sacred essence in themselves, in their quality. For man there is no being higher than the perfect man.

When man discards the age-old theories of "God in the sky," and realizes his own divinity, he is then impelled by the light within him to push on to the goal of self-realization. Restless and

dissatisfied men, seeking ever for light and purpose outside themselves, find only ultimate unhappiness and discontent. "The light," as Fichte said, "is not without me, but within me, and I myself the light."

The solution to the problem of the purpose of human life has been sought by generations of philosophers, but they have as yet failed to give us a completely satisfying answer. The great point about life is that we have it and therefore we must make the best use of it. This indeed is the great value of life, the opportunity of making the best use of it. Hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, of people lead narrow, limited, joyless and depressed lives because they do not try to make the best use of life. The best use of life can only be made by possessing and perpetually, whenever possible, obeying ideals.

What then should be our ideal? It is difficult, of course, to put it into words. To make the world a little better because we have been in it; to leave our land a little happier than we found it; to live our lives for others rather than for ourselves, givers rather than getters; to do what is right, to be true to our conscience—some such ideal as that, however vague and dim, each of us has sometime seen and longed to realise. The desire to be good is inherent in every man; he longs to be other than what he is. We all long to be something other than what we are, and it is this longing that brings us to religion.

To live the good life, to act according to our highest and noblest instincts, is merely the right thing to do. It is, in fact, to be religious, to have reverence for this life. A way of life is possible for man under the new dispensation of knowledge. Taking it for granted that we have the animal heritage, that we have instincts that are survivals of our savage and animal ancestry, we are agreeable to discipline ourselves and to behave with tolerance, sympathy, and compassion to all others. We have to be resolutely self-reliant, not casting on the Cross burdens which we ourselves ought to bear.

Once we have accepted our humble origin and the heritage it has brought us—the "original sin" that we carry with us in our history of development—it is only common sense to say and believe that we have a higher and a lower self. There are instincts good and instincts evil. Without believing that the evil instincts are attributable to a Satan working in us, it still is not an inevitable necessity that we should follow the evil instincts at the expense of the good instincts. For, after all, evil and pain are identical; it is those unable

to see pain as the natural result of doing evil that continue to do evil. The Buddha says: "If a man does evil, let him not do it again ; let him not delight in it: the accumulation of evil is painful." And good and happiness are identical. Again the Buddha, the advocate of the good life, exhorts: " If a man does what is good, let him do it again, let him delight in it: the accumulation of good is delightful." (*Dhammapada*).

The justification of life consists, not in the increasing felicity we fondly fancy it should here and now provide, but in the infinity of its possibilities, the endless variety and succession of its individual figures, the happiness it offers despite its pain, and in inextinguishable hope, as invincible, as its sadness; for the world is both a good and bad world, and man is both a noble and a wicked creature. Life is often so happy and often so sad, and human society is often so cruel, and yet often not lacking in true kindness. Knowing that this is the truth, how shall we proceed except by eminently kind and tolerant thinking? Great wisdom consists in not demanding too much of human nature, and yet not altogether undermining it by weak and indiscriminating indulgence. A man must try to do his best, and at the same time must, when confronted by opposition, or rewarded by partial success, say to himself: "I have done my best"; and even if the battle be doomed to be lost, he would remember that the path of salvation lies not in the victory, but, as Sri Krishna tells Arjuna, in the acceptance of battle. "Not tame and gentle bliss, but disaster, heroically encountered, is man's true happy ending"; and in this spirit one can face with equanimity both life itself, and its tragic and ambiguous rewards.

It is universally agreed that we attain happiness more surely if we do not make it our chief object in life, and that, as Lecky remarks, "men best attain their own happiness by absorbing themselves in the pursuit of the happiness of others." Combine this truth with that other one, equally indisputable, stated by the same author as follows: "The conscience of mankind has ever recognized self-sacrifice as the supreme element of virtue." Fortunate indeed is it that human nature and the conditions of our lives are such that both of these statements are generally true of all times and all places.

In declaring that questions as to whether the world is eternal or not eternal, finite or infinite and so on, did not concern Him or touch the essential point, which is the eradication of egotism, and so of sorrow, by means of the Eightfold Path, the Buddha practically takes the same point of view as that which had been

taken by the ancient Aryans. They held that, whether the soul be mortal or immortal, whether or no there be a God or gods, the duty of man remains clear; namely, to fulfil his social, that is his unselfish nature, and do good without thought of reward. Here is the Dharma that guided our forefathers in their journey through life:

*Paropakārāya phulanti vrksāh,
Paropakārāya vahanti nadyah,
Paropakārāya duhanti gāvah,
Paropakārāya satām hi jivanam.*

“ The fruit tree’s heavy-laden boughs,
The river’s load of fertile soil,
The richly-flowing milk of cows,
The good man’s unremitting toil ;
This wealth is meant, this work is done,
For others’ good, not for their own.”

This is, in essentials, the modern doctrine of Social Service, which also may be said to be the ethical foundation of all the great religions.

Gladstone once said : “Be inspired with the belief that life is a high and noble calling.” Those who live nobly, even if in their day they live obscurely, need not fear that they will have lived in vain. Something radiates from their lives, some light that shows the way to their friends, their neighbours—perhaps to long future ages. There are many men nowadays, oppressed with a sense of impotence, with the feeling that in the vastness of modern societies there is nothing of importance that the individual can do. This is a mistake. The individual, if he is filled with love of mankind, with breadth of vision, with courage and with endurance, can do a great deal.

And those who believe, and those who doubt the persistence of the individual consciousness after death, alike agree that strenuous well-doing in this life would be the best preparation for another. For, says the *Thera Gatha*: “He who does his duty, caring not for heaven or hell as much as for a blade of grass, does not disinherit happiness.” Similarly the *Bhagavad-Gita* says: “In works be thine office ; in their fruits let it never be,” And there is that saying of Christ: “Thou hast been faithful over a few things: I will make thee ruler over many things.” (*Matthew*). The implied belief may seem to be different: The practical moral lesson is the

same. To neglect social duties in order to attain Nirvana, or to be one with Brahma or even to save one's soul is, happily, a dwindling type of religion. In its ultimate objective, the purpose of life is one that should no more concern the mind of any active and thoughtful individual than the lack of similar knowledge fails to arrest the irresistible activity of the bee in its accumulation of honey that a future generation is fated to consume.

That saying from the *Book of Ecclesiastes*: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest," accurately paraphrases the last message of the Buddha to mankind:—"We are transient; let us strive without ceasing." We must strive to refuse the evil and choose the good, to control and direct our lives in the paths of righteousness and love. Our strivings for better relationships, for peace and justice in society, are not merely play-acting on a world stage, where we put on a show because that is the thing to do. The play is not a farce; but a grand and meaningful tragedy in which we are expected to do the best we can, before the curtain comes down quickly and we are gone.

Chapter X

BE TRUE TO YOUR CONSCIENCE

THOSE dangers ahead, the "*Collapse of existing forms*" and "*widespread Suffering*," which James Maxton visualised, in the momentous question he asked, in his *Life of Lenin*, need not happen nor will ever happen, if we use the powers we have within us for life, and not for death.

The Destroyer will not get his chance, the "Three Musketeers"—"*Struggle*," "*Violence*" and "*Brute Force*"—will not come riding out, if we have a wider sense of comradeship with the starving, homeless and shattered—with all those stricken like ourselves, bewildered like ourselves, and struggling for food and security like ourselves.

Let us love life and co-operation, service and sacrifice. Let us hate cruelty. Let us dedicate ourselves to our stricken comrades, so that they may get a decent chance of happiness.

We need no new kind of faith, but a reassertion of unchanging ideals which, for a time, have weakened in the modern mind. SELF-CONTROL does not change, though the occasions for restraint are more numerous. DISCIPLINE does not change, however much it may enlarge its horizon.

We need SELF-CONTROL especially among the so-called leaders. "Self-government is self-control," so said President Masaryk of Czechoslovakia when, after the close of the First World War, his people were organising themselves for democratic independence. Nascent democracy is exposed to grave dangers—more from within than from without. "Do not be proud in prosperity," is the warning given by Kanwa to Sakuntala in the famous drama of Kalidasa. Power corrupts, it is said, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. That is how the British lost America in the eighteenth century, and have now lost India in the twentieth.

Democracy in a capitalist society, a class system of society, must always be a delusion and a snare; democracy in a workers' republic, a classless system of society, with its fine promise of government of the people, by the people, for the people, is a high ideal, but, even if realizable, is too readily liable to abuse; democracy too easily becomes bureaucracy; power too easily corrupts selfless leaders into self-seeking dictators.

Greed for worldly power is an evil, said the Buddha, because it corrupts : because it imposes its will upon others ;

because it involves tyranny and oppression and exploitation. Politically it stands for dictatorship and civil war, the inevitable counterpart of Fascism. In the life of the individual it means fear and intolerance, self-seeking and the ultimate domination of others.

We need DISCIPLINE. "The co-operating element that links the greatness of the past and the hope of the future lies in that one subtle word 'discipline,' which all must interpret rightly and follow loyally," said Sarojini Naidu, the great Indian poetess. Civilization is SELF-DISCIPLINE; its advance is measured by man's gradual mastery of his more savage instincts. No society, be it civilized or uncivilized, is possible if savage instincts are in the ascendant. The aim of civilization, said Fichte, the German philosopher, in 1805, is "to free reason from the domination of the instincts."

We need SELF-CONTROL. We need DISCIPLINE. Without these we cannot hope to control the forces which science, the acquisitive impulse and new ideologies have let loose amongst us. With them, on the other hand, we could reshape this world of ours into spectacular and heart-subduing splendour.

We need TOLERANCE—tolerance that arises from a scientific recognition of the high percentage of fallacy and irrationality in our own beliefs. The wisest man at this stage of the world's affairs is he who knows that none of us is wise.

The art of living, like other arts, is strictly personal, and dependent on the nature of the artist. The art of life denotes that life is individual far more than it is communal, and that the things we are forced to do together are less important than the things we choose to do by ourselves. Another man may inspire us to make more of ourselves, but he will do us irreparable injury if we are persuaded to submerge our minds in his. If we were asked to say what seems to us the essential law of life, and especially of art in life, we would answer that it is diversity, difference; that all happy living is dependent upon diversity, and that this happy living and diversity are impossible without TOLERANCE.

It would be convenient, no doubt, to bureaucrats and people of routine minds if all trees were of one sort, but how diverse and dissimilar they are! The fingerprints of one man differ from the fingerprints of all other men. The legend that twins are identical in Nature is false, nor do they always look alike. Tailoring would be less troublesome if all men were the same size and shape. How happy our hatters would be if heads were standardized! But

Nature abhors uniformity. The supreme law is diversity, and this law makes TOLERANCE essential if we are to live at all.

TOLERANCE is a hard thing to profess, and harder to practise. Each of us has a dictator in his heart. We need intelligent discrimination to be able to tolerate other people's opinions. The less we know, the more intolerant we become. It is impossible, of course, to be tolerant of everybody and everything; nor, indeed, is it desirable that we should be.

Nobody should tolerate injustice or ignorance or poverty or remediable disease. We become evil if we tolerate evil. But before we begin to eliminate evil, let us feel certain that it *is* evil, and not merely idiosyncrasy or harmless whim. I must not eliminate a man because his taste in dress is florid or his nose is of a shape that I dislike, or because I do not care about the way he speaks. Yet who is there among us who has not felt tempted to denounce, and even to misuse, people for offences no greater than these? We expect and demand tolerance that we are seldom willing to concede. Incontinent addicts of tobacco, who are today endangering our social system by their clamour for cigarettes, will yet rebuke without pity or compunction a man who drinks a pot of toddy: tobacco contains nicotine which is injurious to the body; and toddy, yeast, which is beneficial to health.

One important way in which religion has changed people, and made them more civilized, is by making them more tolerant. A tolerant person is one who does not interfere with other people, even if he thinks they are wrong, but is prepared to let them think what they like and say what they think. If he thinks they are wrong, he may try to persuade them to believe differently, but he will not try to force them.

This may not seem a very important point, but a great deal of the misery of mankind in the past has sprung from people being unwilling to tolerate other people thinking differently from themselves. This intolerance has been particularly common in the propagation of Christianity. All over the world the followers of this faith have killed and tortured other people for not believing the same things as they did about the nature of God, and Jesus and the Virgin Mary. TOLERANCE is a characteristic Buddhist virtue which illustrates the doctrine of the Mean. At one extreme lie those who conceive it their duty to save their brothers' souls, even in the face of fierce resentment on the part of those to be 'saved'; at the other extreme lie those who consider that salvation is such a personal affair that they take not the slightest interest in

the spiritual welfare of any of their fellow men. The Buddhist attitude allows each man to mind his own business, yet always offers help where help is needed and desired.

Cultivate TOLERANCE: For tolerance helps you to avoid hasty judgments, to sympathise with other people's troubles, to avoid captious criticism, to realise that even the finest human beings are not infallible; your weaknesses are those of your neighbour, and self-knowledge is not possible to the self-righteous.

Strive for the ideal of Brotherhood through understanding. The world has known enough hatred; let the future be based on the broad foundation of *Maitri*. All the apostrophes addressed to TOLERANCE are of no avail if we miss the fact that it is a state of mind—or, more accurately, a state of heart—and that it must be personal.

The needs of today are not those which called out a Moses in his time. It is not a new ethical creed that is required at this stage of our development. It is no part of the present purpose of this philosophy to present a new constitution for our country. It neither intends nor desires to abrogate the ethical creed of the Buddha.

The constitution of the United States is an almost infinite higher ideal of human liberty and justice than was the Mosaic Code. The Kelaniya Declaration of Independence, of the Sangha of Ceylon, soars to a higher spiritual level than the American Declaration of Independence. The Aryan Eightfold Path still embodies an ethical creed far in advance of the world's development today. What is most necessary now is a governmental code attuned to the principles of conduct which conduce to human happiness, as enunciated by the Buddha.

At the present day and all through human history we witness a struggle between man, with his activities, desires, and ambitions, and his material and social environment.

That struggle is the motive power of progress, which will not be complete until man is in perfect harmony with his environment. When that happens the individual will have, in the words of Spencer, "no desires but those which may be satisfied without exceeding his proper sphere of action, while society maintains no restraints but those which the individual voluntarily respects."

This absolutely perfect adjustment may never be quite attained, but the tendency of things is plainly towards it; and when the world is close upon it, each individual will be able to exercise all his

faculties spontaneously, freely, and beneficially, since all anti-social faculties will by then have been "evolved away."

The meaning of this ultimate ideal, as regards our conduct in the present life, is that what we should aim at is the highest degree of self-realisation which is compatible with equal freedom of self-development on the part of others. This general principle underlies all sound ethical codes, and supplies a sort of philosophical touchstone of social right and wrong.

From this point of view men will regard themselves as inheritors of mental, emotional, and physical faculties, which it is their duty and privilege to exercise to the full, in the most beneficial way. The Christian ideal is one of self-immolation by way of apprenticeship to Heaven; the Buddhist ideal is self-development by way of reaching the highest possible level of welfare and usefulness on earth. To realise that ideal a full measure of earnestness and self-control is required. The process is not simply one of instinctive expression; it is one of self-education. Tennyson's majestic lines on this matter have never been surpassed:

" Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,
These three alone lead life to sovereign power ;
Yet not for power—power of itself would come uncalled for,
But to live by law, acting the law we live by without fear,
And because right is right, to follow right
Were wisdom in the scorn of consequence."

Here we are given what Samuel Laing, in his charming and instructive chapter on "Practical Life" in *Modern Science and Modern Thought*, happily calls 'the gospel of practical life.' "Rightly considered, 'self-reverance, self-knowledge, and self-control' are the three pillars which support the edifice of a wise and well-ordered practical life." "Among the many advantages of self-respect not the least important is that it teaches respect for others." Self-knowledge is "a gift which is, unfortunately, as rare as it is necessary. Without self-knowledge to see our faults, how shall we correct them ? How shall we become wise if insensible to our follies ?" Self-control: "this is, after all, the vitally important element of a happy and successful life. The compass (self-respect) may point truly to the pole; the chart (self-knowledge) may show the right channel amidst shoals and rocks ; but the ship will hardly arrive safely in port unless the helmsman stands at his post in all weathers, ready to meet any sheer of the bow by a timely turn to starboard or to port."

“ Self-reverence, self-knowledge and self-control ” are the three forces most necessary for “**RIGHTEOUSNESS OF ACTION AND LIVING.**” It would seem to be better to change the order in which the poet has written them, to that in which the Buddha gave them to us: Self-knowledge *Panna*, (Right Views, Right Aspiration); Self-reverence *Sila*, (Right Speech, Right Action, Right Living); Self-control *Samādhi*, (Right Effort, Right Thought, Right Concentration). We can revere ourselves, and can effectively control ourselves, only when we know our better selves. Self-knowledge often reveals some most extraordinary defects or deficiencies in our character which perhaps we would never have been aware of otherwise; but to know our faults is the first step towards overcoming them.

On the portals of the ancient world was written “Know thyself.” This is a fit motto for all men and women who wish to live happily and make the best of their lives. It should be written in letters of fire upon the mind and heart of every man and woman in the world. Self-knowledge is the most essential factor in any situation in life. The first step to know one’s self is to **CONTROL** the mind, **DISCIPLINE** it and turn it on one’s self; just as you would a torch on an unknown path. You will find the light of reason focussed on your life. Sort out all the dross and impure from the good and right, “because right is **RIGHT.**” With the clear light of reason lighting up your life, you will soon learn to know and understand self.

Then, with Browning, recognize the great fact that :

“ **TRUTH** is within ourselves ; it takes no rise
From outward things, whate’er you may believe,
There is an inmost centre in us all,
Where **TRUTH** abides in fulness.”

What prevents us from believing in the **TRUTH** is our selfishness, our pride, our cruelties, and our stupidity. These appear so real that our power to believe in the **TRUTH** is crippled. “When the warring classes shall know themselves as one,” men and women will know that they are free.

There is no more important injunction in all the world, nor one with a deeper interior meaning, than “To thine own self be true.” In other words, **BE TRUE TO YOUR OWN CONSCIENCE ;**

“ And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou can’st not then be false to any man.”

The TRUTH is often unpleasant. We really have no difficulty in finding the standard. We know the yard-sticks of measurement. We know the vocabulary of human justice all too well. We know and must admit, if we are honest with ourselves, that the standards of moral conduct are neither vague nor obscure. They are clear and unmistakable. They are before our eyes, in our minds, where they have always been. We may choose to ignore them. We may make excuses that times are different and circumstances more complex than they were 2500 years ago. We may even argue that the language of the moral code is a bit trite and that, perhaps, it needs to be streamlined or attuned to modern receptiveness.

But these are the evasive excuses of the guilty mind as we face so often the inexorable truth. We do not like TRUTH because sometimes it is unpleasant, it is inconvenient, and also it is frequently expensive in pride as well as money. This, nevertheless, does not and cannot alter the basic principles of human ethics. We know in our conscience the difference between right and wrong, though, to be sure, we may rationalize a thousand explanations for failing to perceive that difference.

So it is with nations. They know wherein they err. They know full well what they neglect to do. They know now every bit, as much as we shall ever know, the true causes of war and revolution.

Peace can only come when the causes of war and revolution are removed. So long as there is the domination of one country over another, or the exploitation of one class by another, there will always be attempts to subvert the existing order, and no stable equilibrium can endure.

The facts are there and the TRUTH is engraved on the tablets of history. When will they begin to admit that TRUTH? When will they begin to see that all wars and revolts are man-made, and that they are the direct result of the unwillingness of man to face RIGHT, and correct his conduct to conform with TRUTH?

Man is his own deliverer, he has brought about his thralldom; he can bring about his emancipation. All through the ages he has looked, and is still looking, for an external deliverer, but he still remains bound. The great deliverer is within; He is the spirit of TRUTH; and the spirit of TRUTH is the spirit of RIGHT; and he is in the spirit of RIGHT who lives habitually in RIGHT THOUGHTS and their effects, RIGHT ACTIONS.

The convulsions of history may transform the map of nations or the abodes of individuals, but the basic ingredients of human

behaviour remain the same. Circumstances change, but principles are immutable. Constitutions may come and go, and laws may be repealed or amended, but the codes of morality and the compensations of a righteous life do not change. For whether we examine them in the light of the Noble Eightfold Path of the Buddha, or review them in the teachings of other religions, we see human conduct so clearly defined that we know instantly in our hearts what is or is not right. We know, if only we will admit or confess it, if only we will be absolutely honest with ourselves.

Throughout all the struggles and strivings of the human race, all its blunderings and conflicts, all its stupidities and failures, this "*Force of Intelligence*" guided many simple and noble minds—before and after the Buddha—and its power sustained them. Only by such conviction again, re-awakened and strengthened by new knowledge, "BY CONSCIOUS PURSUIT OF TRUTH AND RIGHT, AND BY RIGHTEOUSNESS OF ACTION AND LIVING," distributing more fairly the fruits of toil, working for peace, and raising the standard of *Muitri*,

“ MAY THE WISE MAN MAKE FOR HIMSELF AN ISLAND
WHICH NO FLOOD CAN OVERWHELM.”

*Dīpam kairātha medhāvī
Yam ogho nābhikīrati.*

Here ends the *Kalyana Magga*, or "The Path of Happiness."

THE ILLUSORY WORLD

No actor, but action there is,
No perceiver, but perception there is ;
Empty phenomena there are,
Thus does the world roll on and on.

Misery only doth exist, none miserable,
No doer is there ; naught save the deed is found.
Nirvana is, but not the man who seeks it,
The Path exists, but not the traveller on it.

No God, no Brahma, can be called
The maker of this tabernacle ;
Empty phenomena roll on,
Dependent on conditions all.

—VISUDDHI MAGGA

(1) *Continuity Without Permanence*

SHAKESPEARE says that “ all the world’s a stage, ” and, again, that :

“ Life’s but a walking shadow ; a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more.”

The teaching of the Buddha, however, is that in the life drama there are no actors, no stage and no spectators; the only reality is the lightning like sequence of actions which we perceive as a continuity. Where we imagined the ‘ I ’ or self to be, there is only, Buddhism tells us, a series of fleeting impressions, sensations, fancies, pains, and pleasures, which succeed each other with amazing rapidity, but without any support or tie between them, no entity over and above them which as centre or subject thinks, feels, or desires. This notion of self is a mirage or hallucination, and this ‘ I ’, with which we fancy ourselves to have some acquaintance, is an illusion.

If you could take a stroll in the external world, and somehow, unassisted by the apparatus of eye and ear, look about you, you would find there, so science declares, a complicated web of movements and nothing else but movements, neither shaped nor coloured. As there is nothing in the word ‘ circle ’ which has anything in

common with or resembles a circle, or in the word 'fish' which resembles a salmon or a shark, there is nothing in an event which has anything in common with or resembles our perception of it. Our nerves convey vibrations and only vibrations, of which we make the picture we suppose ourselves to see.

The physical world, science maintains, consists simply and solely of vibratory motions. It tells us that the nerves which convey the various sense messages, of sight, touch and hearing, are merely wires, alike and interchangeable. It is not in them, therefore, that the messages of sense are sorted out. The 'self' is the sorter, we are the artists, and the pictures we see could not be found in the brain. They are ours and ours only.

There is no such thing as pure perception. It is a part, and a part only, of that active and energetic faculty we call thought, and it involves memory and anticipation, forethought and afterthought. You place a rose before a mirror. The mirror reflects the rose, but has no knowledge of it, is not even aware of it. The eye has no more knowledge, no more awareness, no more consciousness of the rose than has the mirror. In a word, to separate the seen from the seer is allowed to be finally and utterly impossible. We are, as Niels Bohr expressed it, "both spectators and actors in the great drama of existence."

Our senses perceive innumerable "realities" around us. These we see or feel as real. It is obvious to the mind's eye that they exist. But, replies the Buddha, nothing exists statically except the thought of it; as we hold it statically in our minds, the thing itself has already changed. The difference in the time-change process between one act and another is due purely to our human standards of sense measurements and the individual angle of perception.

We say "as hard as iron," but in the sun iron is only a vapour. Such facts chosen at random show that all our descriptions of Nature are only temporary and provisional. We imagine that we are dealing with what is real, fixed, and final, whereas nothing is final and there are only relative fixtures. This means that we possess only comparatively stable points of reference within the changing universe, and these points of reference give us the illusion of permanence and reality. Some things seem more real than others only because they have a longer lease of existence and vanish less rapidly. But all is in transit, and sooner or later, "the dew-drop slips into the shining sea."

Like the mountain stream, everything is a flow. It is this flow or 'flowing' which we perceive as reality—the reality of

continuous be-ing and be-coming. And there is no difference between this being and becoming—the difference lies in the illusion of the time-perception factor.

A man with only a foot-rule is compelled to measure everything in terms of feet. In a larger way we cognate within the limit of our five senses. If some miraculous power suddenly changed our ability to react to light-waves, and, instead, gave us an equally useful sense of "seeing" in reaction to electric waves, our whole world would be immediately changed. Gone in a moment would be our previous notions of reality. Yet "the thing-in-itself" of our surroundings would still be in the same processes of functioning; only our standard of measurement would have altered. The flow—the being and becoming—would continue just as usual.

The whole universe is a dynamic reality. Nothing is static except in the mind's eye. The entire universe is in perpetual motion. All manifestations are the results of various degrees of frequency. The degree of molecular frequency is one; the degree of light frequency is another; the degree of that frequency that manifests itself as life, as we know it, is another.

The elements of being are all independent entities, existing of and by themselves and not in dependence, one upon another. The elements of existence are momentary appearances, momentary flashings into the phenomenal world out of an unknown source. They are not connected one with another. They disappear as soon as they appear, in order to be followed the next moment by another momentary existence.

"One conscious state arises and quite another ceases,
In sequence like a river's flow, these states of
mind and matter go."

Thus the most perfect illustration of the stream of existence is a cinema picture, which is made up of thousands of individual pictures, each separate and distinct, but following one another on the screen with such quickness that the illusion of continuity is produced. Thus every flashing moment in the life stream, which is all that the Buddhists recognize as *personality* or *individuality*, is distinct from and independent of every preceding and every following moment.

Analysing a human being, we simply find a composition of mind (*nama*), and body (*rupa*); mind being further analysed into sensations (*vedana*), perceptions (*sanna*), tendencies (*sankhara*), and consciousness (*viññāna*), which all together constitute the five

khandhas or aggregates of existence, a composition of physical and psychical elements which together form a character or individual person.

These five *khandhas* constitute a human being. They are severally and collectively impermanent, non-substantial and illusory as there is no *ātman* in them. This doctrine of *pudgala-nairatman* (non-substantiality or phenomenality of the individual), is enunciated in the Buddha's second discourse, in which He declares that the five *khandhas* are devoid of *atman*, and that a wise man should say with regard to *rupa*, *vedana*, *sanna*, *sankhara* and *viññāna*: "This is not mine. I am not this. This is not *ātman*."

Buddhaghosa, in the *Visuddhi Magga*, says: "The words 'living entity' or 'Ego' are but a mode of expression for the presence of the five attachment groups, but when we come to examine the elements one by one we discover that, in the absolute sense, there is no 'living entity' there to form a basis for such figments as 'I am' or 'I'; in other words, that in the absolute sense, there is only '*nama*' and '*rupa*.' The insight of him who perceives this is called 'knowledge of the truth.'"

The Buddha makes it clear that it is an error to think of *viññāna*, or consciousness, as a permanent entity and to take it to be the 'speaker' and the 'feeler.' (*vado vedeyyo*). *Viññāna* is a changing factor—a view-point which may be regarded as probably foreshadowing the later *Milinda Panha* statement: *na ca so, na ca anno*, "he is not the same, yet he is not another." It is clear from this statement that a permanent entity is denied (*na ca so*), and, while leaving open the possibility of a changing factor in rebirth, it indirectly asserts a connection with the former individual (*na ca anno*).

Consciousness is the manifestation of the electrical activity of the living brain, as light and heat are the manifestations of a glowing bar of steel. The mental "electrons" come into existence, endure but for a moment, and disappear like a spark in the night. Speaking of the duration of mental states, it is said every state of consciousness has three phases: genesis (*uppāda*), development (*ṭhiti*), and dissolution (*bhaṅga*). Each of these occupies an infinitesimal division of time, an instant, a *kṣaṇa*. The space of three instants in which a state of consciousness becomes, exists and vanishes is called a *cittakṣaṇa*. There is not even an instant for which the conscious state is steady. It simply grows and decays with no static interval, however infinitesimal it might be. The *Visuddhi Magga* says:

“The being of a past moment of thought has lived, but does not live nor will it live. The being of a future moment will live, but has not lived nor does it live. The being of the present moment of thought does live, but has not lived nor will it live.”

The “Maha-tanha-sankhaya Sutta” of the *Majjhima Nikaya* asserts that *viññāna* arises through a cause—stimulus—and that there would be no consciousness in the absence of a cause (*annatra paccaya natthi viññānassa sambhavo*). The sense-organs of a normal man receive stimuli from the outer world, and these produce electric changes which are propagated over his nerves to his brain. Here they produce further changes, as the result of which—after a series of processes we do not in the least understand—consciousness is manifested.

It may be argued by those who are inclined to combat this analysis of causation, that if this thesis were true every specimen of mankind would act and think precisely as do his fellow men. And, granted absolute equality of conditions governing sensory impressions, this duplication of mentality would occur. To a big extent it does occur. There is not, however, even in the most primitive civilizations, any absolute equality. Invariably individuals, through abnormal physiological or pathological modifications of sensory stimuli, depart from the normal. And the definiteness and variety of these departures are coincident with the extension of intelligence; provided they are, through repetition or universality, sufficiently well worn to form the nuclei for the genesis of new associations, or the amplification or restriction of the old ones.

Our thoughts, feelings, longings, aspirations and passions are manifestations of the brain; the seat of man's wisdom and his follies, the governing mechanism of the individual, when it is narcotized, destroyed, or dead, consciousness disappears. Man's brain does not stand as a thing apart. The body as well as consciousness exists only as a complex of manifold interconnected origination and de cease; but neither body nor consciousness has existence as a self-contained substance, sustaining itself *per se*.

The phenomenon of consciousness is fundamentally conditioned by the effects of external stimuli upon the effects of internal stimuli which reflect the activities of the body itself—it is a product of nervous processes representing the clash of the individual with the external environment. It is “the sequence of states of mind caused by the casual impact of sense and object. The contact takes place ‘as when two rams are butting together.’ The

eye is one and the object another, and the compact is the union of the two." (*Milinda Panha* and *Majjhima Nikaya*). The *Dhammasangani* holds that external phenomena are caused by the impinging on and modification of the internal or personal *rupa* by way of sense.

As a result of stimuli of the sense-organs the mind acquires perceptions of the outer world. These give rise to impressions and ideas in turn, an impression denoting a sensation, emotion or feeling at the moment when a perception first makes its appearance in the mind, and an idea denoting what is left of an impression when its first vigour is spent, including, for instance, the memory of an impression or the repetition of it in a dream. Thus the whole content of a man's mind can consist of three parts at most—a part that was in his mind at birth, a part that has entered through his sense-organs, and a part which has been developed out of these two parts by processes of reflection and ratiocination.

(2) *Birth of Self-Consciousness*

THE ability of man to think is derived from, and co-extensive with, his consciousness. Walker says, "Mind in itself is believed to be a subtle form of static energy, from which arise the activities called 'thought,' which is the dynamic phase of mind. Mind is static energy, thought is dynamic energy—the two phases of the same thing." Thought is therefore the vibratory force formed by converting static mind into dynamic mind.

Consciousness is in evolution. Just as consciousness rose from the simple "irritability" of protoplasm, so the self-consciousness which is the pride of man rose from the consciousness of the brute. In the human individual life we see the process repeated; the simple cell develops through continuous stages from subconscious life to the full possession of self-consciousness and reasoning powers. Consciousness, therefore, is in various degrees. Each degree has its frequency. That frequency is a vibratory emanation of the vital force; the thing that is: the individual rate. There is a degree in the evolution of consciousness of each individual, and your individual frequency and your degree of consciousness are related.

Our human consciousness is a logical, nay an inevitable, evolutionary extension of the consciousness of an animal. In reality, consciousness exists at the very origin of life, though it appears to be evolved only after form arises. The consciousness of the formless and of very simple forms is, of course, very far from

self-consciousness, as exhibited by the human race, and it lies almost dormant in the mineral kingdom, slightly more awake in the lower forms of vegetable life, slowly evolving in animal life and more rapidly manifesting itself in animals which possess nervous systems; while in the advanced stages of humanity the intensity of awareness corresponds to the complexity of the brain structure. The more simple the construction, the more feeble the manifestation of consciousness; and progress to higher development results from the mutual interaction of the consciousness and the brain machinery.

To us who function only in the realm of normal consciousness, the super-consciousness of a perfected man seems astounding, but hardly less astounding is that consciousness, known as instinct, which is so wondrously manifested in beasts, birds and insects. The amoeba is the lowest form of life; it is simply a mass of animal matter, a unit without stable form, constantly flowing and changing in its search for sustenance. It will wrap itself around a grain of sand as readily as around a particle of animal or vegetable matter, but its dim consciousness tells it the grain of sand is useless as food; so it unwraps itself and lets the sand go and continues its search for suitable nutriment, finding which, it again wraps its jelly-like shape around the particle and remains so until the nutriment is absorbed. Thus, this low form of life, which is simply a mass of jelly-like substance, possesses irritability, which is awareness, which is consciousness.

This consciousness in the lower forms of life, which manifests itself as instinct, is hardly less marvellous than the high consciousness known as intuition. The difference between instinct and intelligence is rather of degree than of kind. In the lower forms of life, where instinct has full play, the amazing certainty with which it works is beyond ordinary intelligence, though far below it in the stage of evolution. Instinct is reflected in outward movements instead of being reflected inwardly, as in intelligence, and is evolved without self-consciousness, through long ages of failures and successes, while intelligence is evolved through conscious reasoning. The exact dividing line between instinct and intelligence is almost impossible to distinguish, one leading gradually to the other, the lowest form of intelligence being, apparently, lower than the highest form of instinct.

Throughout Nature, mind does show a development or evolution that is indeed a smooth continuum, without erratic leaping or arbitrary introductions: from the stir in the cell, to the greater

complexity in the plants, to fish, reptiles, birds, mammals, and at last man. Man's mind, no less than his body, does thus have a link with his predecessors', and surely grows out of them. But it is also true that, when consciousness has reached the development of self-consciousness—by no matter how steady and continuous a process it has been brought to that stage, it does suddenly and abruptly, in that instant, thrust its possessor into an entirely new world of dimension, so that it becomes participant in constructs of time, space, implicated relationships and instantly-created moral values.

This birth of self-consciousness is a thing that comes at the end of a long series of continuous anticipations: but it is a thing which, when it does come, flashes into existence as an altogether new thing under the sun. That our minds are of the earth, earthy, and are at the same time in a clear and unique sense transcendent of the merely earthly, is a kind of paradox which it may be uncomfortable to try to realize. Such is nevertheless the view to which we are compelled by the evident facts of animal life and human life. We share, with animals and indeed with all life, intelligence. But in the fact that man not only knows, but *knows* he knows—in that instant that he graduates from being merely an intelligent agent to an agent aware of his own self as significant in agency—in that fact and in that instant he takes on a psychic stature peculiar and unprecedented in the history of the world.

With the appearance of man, all the long growth of learning and associations and widening intelligence suddenly attains a point at which the merely active self suddenly *sees* itself. That moment is the coming of reason—the emergence from the embryonic stage of consciousness into self-consciousness. In that moment, the life of being becomes a wholly new kind of life: a life of realizing, a thing of awareness and capable of immense possibilities. It occurs at the end of a long process, yes; but it is as sudden and different a thing as when, from the coming together of two flints, there bursts out the element of fire.

Yet it is not a new spark of the Divine Fire just thrown off with the birth of the babe, but has existed for ages, taking birth from time to time, adapting its structure, continuously developing knowledge and experience and growing from mere awareness to self-consciousness. This is the theory of life called evolution, or progressive growth, which requires long periods of time for the development of man.

(3) *The Search for the Unsearchable*

RELIGION may take an infinite number of forms. Religion does not necessarily involve belief in a personal God, or in a life beyond the grave, or any doctrine of the supernatural. Religion is a force within man which manifests itself in his attempt to find a solution to the universal reality of which he is a part.

What exactly do we mean by the expression "God"? If the term "God" refers to some kind of self-contained separate entity residing in some heaven and having unlimited power of creation, destruction etc., in other words, a personified individual whom we can supplicate for favours etc., then Buddhism says, No. On the other hand, if we refer to some ever-present and changeless reality, an unknown or unknowable principle; the only real thing in a world of unreality, something which we are incapable of comprehending until we rid ourselves of "sense desires", something which, when we remove the veil of ignorance, will be revealed as having been ever-present, then this kind of "God" does exist. This is the Ultimate Reality, the source of all existence. This was taught by the Buddha, and later by Christ, for Christ says, everything proceedeth from my "Father," in that sense. If we go further into ancient scriptures, like the Vedantas, which existed prior to the time of the Buddha, we will find that such was taught. But, unfortunately, the world has always sought to explain the unknowable reality in terms of the knowable actuality, and this is where the whole enquiry has been perverted and false impressions created.

What is a God? It was remarked by Blake that "all deities reside in the human breast." Or, in Spinoza's acid phrase, a community of triangles would worship a triangular God. The old saying of Xenophanes, that if cattle or lions could picture the gods, they would make them like cattle or lions, is more than superficially true. If man sometimes makes his gods in non-human form, in animal form like the Egyptians, in pillar or tree form like the Minoans, that does not alter the main fact of anthropomorphism; for the worshipper thinks of the animal or the pillar as having the same feelings as himself. He fears its anger; he appeases it with gifts, he cajoles it with compliments, avoids stirring its jealousy, and the like.

People of all ages and races have formed an image of God after their own fancies. In the Coptic palace chapel at Addis Ababa

where Haile Selassie, Emperor of Ethiopia, worships, God and all the angels are depicted black and fuzzy-headed, and all the devils are white.

“ The Ethiop gods have Ethiop lips,
Bronze cheeks and woolly hair ;
The Grecian gods are like the Greeks,
As keen-eyed, cold and fair. ”

In a Church in Germany a Nazi artist has pictured God with a “ tooth-brush ” moustache and Swastika arm-band. So each man seeks a deity after his own heart. Your God is your ideal. A community of logicians would ask for a First Cause, a community of mathematicians for a God who geometrises, while a community of Newmans would create for themselves a God of love.

Men cherish the idea that the powers above look upon the human race with a friendly eye. ‘ Surely ’, they think, ‘ the gods cannot be our enemies. ’ They have not, however, at all times been of that opinion. ‘ If we were as rich as you ’, said a Hindu poet, addressing the gods, ‘ we would not allow our worshippers to beg their bread. ’ A great mass of forbidding evidence raises itself up against the thesis that the gods are kind. In the eyes of early man the case against them looked black. It was in past times very generally feared that they regarded mankind either with jealousy and disfavour or with complete indifference. Or, if they concerned themselves at all with mortal affairs, they bestowed their scant and capricious favours upon this or that individual, tribe or community, for reasons hard to determine.

Poets and thinkers since the dawn of reason have not seldom been driven to think of human life as cruelly unreasonable, and of man as a wild animal caught in a trap. Turn to the *Jataka* in the Buddhist Tri-pitaka, or to *The Book of Job*, in the Christian Bible, and you may read eloquent descriptions of the human lot—its desolation ascribed not to men, but to the Creator or to the Governor of the universe Himself. With what fierce rebuke did an early poet fling his charges against the Creator of popular theology : In the *Bhuridatta-Jataka*, the Bodhisattva says :

“ He who has eyes can see the sickening sight ;
Why does not Brahma set his creatures right ?

If his wide power no limits can restrain,
Why is his hand so rarely spread to bless ?

Why are his creatures all condemned to pain ?
Why does he not to all give happiness ?

Why do fraud, lies, and ignorance prevail ?
Why triumphs falsehood—truth and justice fail ?

I count your Brahma one th' unjust among,
Who made a world in which to shelter wrong."

When Job's friends, in conformity with Jewish religion, contend that it is his own sin which has brought him the divine displeasure, he breaks out upon them in scornful indignation. He refuses to listen to such sophistries. The sense that he has done his utmost to serve God and do righteousness, and none the less been betrayed and abandoned, is strong upon him. The outbursts of the most modern pessimists are matched in his fierce utterances :

"I will not restrain my mouth,
I will speak in the heaviness of my spirit,
I will complain in the bitterness of my soul.

Were I to call, and He answered,
I would not believe that He heard my voice.

He mocks at the despair of the guiltless."

Job submits because he must, but is not persuaded either of the benevolence or of the justice of God.

Disappointment with life in some form or other lies at the root of all religion. To be thoroughly religious, one must be sorely disappointed. One's faith in religion increases as one's faith in the world decreases. Had life contented us, had it been all that we could wish, we should be already in heaven, and in no need to seek happiness here or elsewhere. And to persuade men that the Creator was a God of love, and their misfortune of their own contriving, has proved an embarrassing and not too successful undertaking.

A century and a half have elapsed since Comte claimed pre-eminence for science, counselled the Church to abandon its vain search for an incomprehensible God, and to devote itself to the service of mankind, and stated that the true function of philosophy was to co-ordinate and systematize the discoveries of science.

Theologians had busied themselves since the world began with arguments for God's existence, and still busy themselves. Unhappily they fell far short of the demonstration that Newman required.

At the most they demonstrated only a First Cause, Aristotle's Prime Mover, Plato's 'Self-subsistent Being' or Henri Bergson's *Élan Vital*.

The Buddha's philosophy is often called the philosophy of change, but it might equally well have been called the philosophy of creative evolution. For Him the universe must be conceived of as being a continuous flow which has neither beginning nor end, completeness nor finality. There is a reality, a creative force, operating throughout the universe. This reality:—"the unborn (*ajātam*), the unoriginated (*abhūtam*), the uncreated (*akātam*), the unevolved (*asamkhātam*)"—is the source of all existence. To this reality, which progressively creates the evolving universe, Buddhism gives the name *Amata*, the "Eternal" or the "Deathless." (See Appendix Two).

Buddhism believes that there exists, behind the visible ever changing movement of the universe, a higher principle, which, itself unchanging, is the source of change; itself beyond existence, is the source of all that exists. The Buddha said: "There is, O Brethren, that which is unborn, which has not become, is uncreate and unevolved. Unless, O Brethren, there were that which is unborn, which has not become, is uncreate and unevolved, there could not be cognised here the springing out of what is born, has become, is created and evolved. And surely because, O Brethren, there is that which is unborn, has not become, is uncreate and unevolved, therefore is cognised the outspringing of what is born, has become, is created and evolved." (*Udana*). The evolution of life on this earth cannot be accounted for unless such a creative force is postulated, for otherwise it is impossible to understand why evolution has not long ago come to an end. Buddhism believes in an ontological reality that endures beneath the shifting appearances of the visible world.

Although we find no centre of reality or principle of permanence in the flux of life and the whirl of the world, it does not follow that there is nothing real anywhere at all except the agitation of forces. The vital question is what gives the impetus? What sets the wheel in motion? If the mind is a flux and the object world another, is there or is there not a reality in which the two have their becoming? Either we should look upon the ultimate reality as a growing principle, or we must admit some permanent identity which manifests and maintains itself in the whole process of change.

According to Aristotle, identity is necessary for all change. All change involves a constant without which we cannot conceive of

change. It is the truth contained in Kant's *Second Analogy of Experience*; "without the permanent, no relations in time are possible." The possibility of any succession implies a relative permanence. There must be something not in the succession but permanent that can carry on each vanishing moment of the succession and add it to the next. "If we accept the 'momentariness' view," says Prof. Radhakrishnan, "we have to admit causation and continuity with their correlates of permanence and identity, or resolve the world into a devil's dance of wild forces, and give up all attempts at comprehending it."

Centuries before Kant, the great Indian philosopher Samkara criticised the doctrine of *Ksanikavada*, or momentariness, in his commentary on the *Vedanta Sūtras*. Samkara points out the inconsistency between causation with its implication of permanence and the momentariness doctrine thus: "According to the Buddhists everything has a momentary existence. So when the second moment arrives, the thing which was existing in the first moment ceases to exist, and an entirely new thing springs up. Accordingly, you cannot maintain that the preceding thing is the cause of the succeeding thing, or that the latter is the effect of the former. The preceding thing, according to the theory of momentariness, has ceased to be when the succeeding moment arrives; that is to say, the former becomes non-existent when the thing of the succeeding moment comes into being and therefore cannot be regarded as producing the latter, since non-existence cannot be the cause of existence." The validity of this objection must be admitted. But it is not correct to say that "to the Buddhist *everything* has a momentary existence." Buddhism believes in a permanent and changeless reality, the *Amata*, underlying all changes. Every sensation is a sensation of something outside of the mind. Thus, there must be a reality, a real world, which influences the mind. Prof. Max Muller says that "even for Buddha a something existed which is not made, and which therefore is imperishable and eternal."

There must have been a time, before any universe existed, when only the creative force existed. Man, unable to conceive of anything that never had a beginning, asks, 'Who, then, made this force?' Science is now asserting that time and space do not exist, and that in reality there are no beginnings and endings, only change in form. It is difficult for finite minds to grasp the idea that the creative force did not have a maker, that it is eternally existent.

We measure time by millions of years, and say that uncounted millions of ages ago this creative force must have had a start. It is not necessary to say this, because the very nature of it is such that it is not a commodity, a material thing that had to have a maker. The simplest answer is, 'It always was,' because it is not limited by either time or space. And let us not fall into the error of some theologians—that of making this force an enlarged image of ourselves.

Electrons and electricity, life and mind, are all manifestations of one static and unchanging creative force. The beginning of life was not an accident or a fortuitous event which occurred some millions of years ago. It is a phenomenon that repeats itself every day. Life creates: "As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end." And life does not represent the entrance of a new form of energy into the universe, or a new series of laws but is a step in the same old evolutionary process resulting from a creative force which is limitless and ordered.

Many names have been given to this force—God, Father, Tao, Allah, Brahma, Zeus, Jupiter, Jehovah, First Cause, *Elan Vital*, Universal Mind, Cosmic Intelligence, Absolute, *Amata*, according to the group which has applied the name. The whole process of creation; the entire creation of the inanimate and animate world, is merely the outcome of mechanical force and action; it has come about through fixed laws, and it is not the work of a personal Creator. We humans are weak-kneed beings. Most of us still demand a God cast in our own mould—one who can give succour when approached in prayer. An emotional need has called Him into being.

The objective world is governed by an impersonal principle. Man has personalised this principle and called it 'God.' The Buddhists, however, look upon it as the permeating essence or principle of all that exists. Even in the mere mechanism of a godless universe, Buddhism sees law and order. The wheel of the cosmic order goes on "without maker, without known beginning, continuously to exist by nature of concatenation of cause and effect." (*Visuddhi Magga*). The activity, *Niyama*, or 'the process of going on,' of the creative force, has been separated into its various phases and named *Karman Niyama*, or law of cause and effect; *Utu Niyama*, or physical inorganic order; *Bija Niyama*, or order of plants, the organic order; *Citta Niyama*, or law of mind or thought; *Dhamma Niyama*, or order of the norm, or the working of Nature in producing a perfectly adapted type through the evolutionary process.

Buddha's teaching of creative evolution closely parallels present day scientific thought. Many centuries before Charles Darwin was born, He hurled his philosophical tenets of evolution against the doctrine of creation by an omnipotent God. In His doctrine, the complete independence and freedom of the human mind, its full confidence in its own powers, were exhibited to the world in general, for the first time. Nietzsche called the Greeks 'the best heirs and scholars of Asia,' and Professor Garbe has drawn attention to the profound influence of Indian thought upon Greek philosophy in the period of its greatest splendour.

We have Nietzsche's doctrine of eternal rhythm in the universe which echoes the theory of recurrent cycles expressed in Buddhist teaching. Sir James Jeans suggests that the universe will ultimately dissolve into radiation and that a reverse process will follow. In short, he returns to the belief in cyclic creation which has been a fundamental doctrine of Buddhist thought. Indeed, the idea that the universe is ultimately annihilated and then recreated anew after a period of rest possesses a history which extends from China to Persia also, and, according to the most ancient Hindu philosophers, as expressed in their cosmological histories, the *Puranas*, universes are born out of the womb of infinite space, exist for countless ages, are subject to decay and finally to dissolution.

In this dissolved state, which can be nothing other than a state of ray existence, in scientific terms, they exist latently. Then there is a re-creation and the latent universe reappears and slowly evolves once again through long aeons of time. Sir Arthur Eddington has advanced nearly the same view in his theory that the whole universe is steadily and irrevocably running down like a clock, a theory which drew from Dean Inge the pertinent question, "Is it not reasonable to assume that whatever power wound up the clock once may probably be able to wind it up again?"

Yes! it will be wound up again, but it will not be by an old be-whiskered gentleman, in glorified human form, sitting in a definite place above the sky called heaven, surrounded by angels and archangels singing "Glory, glory, Hallelujah" and having the Book of Life in his hand, in which are duly entered the sins and shortcomings of man against the awful day of judgment, a being who is slow to anger, but whose anger, once aroused, is almost unappeasable, who places burdens upon men in order that they may come forth as pure gold.

A world made in six days according to divine specification is a very different thing from one which has struggled into being

through millions of years marked by waste, bloodshed, and abortive effort in one direction after another. Nor is it safe to point to the wonderful adaptations of means to ends in Nature. Nothing could be more ingenious than the adaptation of the mosquito as a carrier of disease. An amazing amount of forethought and skill must have gone to devising such an elaborate and effective method of inoculating man with deadly fever. Unfortunately, the forethought and skill are, from the standpoint of humanity, diabolical.

Buddhism shatters the many images of God which man has made for himself, even while it asserts the reality of a power behind the cosmic process. The "Eternal" is not to be conceived as a personal Deity set up in the heavens, or as a Potter fashioning vessels of clay, or even as a Father rejoicing in the return of the prodigal. It is the universal principle of life immanent in ourselves and all else that exists. It supports and penetrates the cosmos while infinitely transcending it. It acts through well-established laws, whose operation is not suspended for the sake of this or that individual. If we fall into error no supernatural deliverer will come to our rescue. There is no forgiveness for a broken law. No single word can be unsaid, no single step retraced. The past is irrevocable, however free the future may be.

Throughout the ages a power, often unrecognised and misunderstood, has been drawing man forward in evolution. A great driving force urges humanity ever on. There is no rest for the weary; every end is a fresh beginning, and every earthly summit attained does but reveal a height beyond; and we must continually struggle forward or sink back in darkness.

Man's history shows him trying to elude this driving force, to get away from it, "to seek satisfaction now here, now there," plunging first into one earthly satisfaction and then into another, hiding within successive fleshly delights, but always pursued and driven remorselessly on until, beyond the final stage of his evolution, he reaches the state which the Buddha called Nirvana or deliverance, the 'passionless peace' or the serenity of mind which arises from the extinction of self-born aims and earth-bound desires.

Though the world is a world of law, the supreme law of the world is not physical but moral. The reality of men and of societies consists not in wealth and power but in their inner moral quality; it is this which governs their destiny. This truth is common to the great religions.

For monotheists, this means that God is an absolute self, not an impersonal principle of moral order. With Buddhism,

theistic religion would assert that at the heart of all happening in the universe there is a rigorous law of moral consequence, holding over from the visible to the invisible reaches of destiny. With Buddhism also, this law of retribution is subject to a higher principle, admitting release. For theistic religion this 'higher principle' is personal, for Buddhism it is impersonal.

A personal or super-personal Being, if He is to inspire our affection and respect, must embody in some way the human concept of moral excellence, and cannot be indifferent to our aspirations or to the sufferings of all sentient life. The unprejudiced inquirer, however, confronted by the hard facts of his cosmic environment, finds the evidence conclusive that, were there a Being in any sense personal, He must be utterly callous, and therefore totally without moral excellence. In the *Mahabodhi-Jataka* the Bodhisattva says :

“ If there exists a Being all-powerful to fulfil
In every creature weal or woe, and action good or ill,
That Being is stained with sin. Man does but work his will. ”

There is the argument of theology that the pot may not complain to the Potter, or ask 'Wherefore hast thou made me thus ?' With this attitude of mind which identifies the will of a despot with righteousness, the Buddhist has little sympathy. He replies, 'If the Potter chooses to make creatures who can think and feel, sentient and reflective pots, they enter immediately into rights of their own. You cannot, even if a God, create sentient beings, and stand clear of responsibility for their undeserved miseries. To make pots that suffer and have no compensation for their sufferings, that are steeped in ignorance of the cause of their wretchedness, is not from any human standpoint defensible, and assuredly provides no reason for praising their Creator. "Is it not possible," asks Dostoevsky, "to eat me up without insisting that I should sing the praises of my devourer ?"'

As regards an impersonal God, whether He resembles a Force, a Principle or a Law, both religionist and rationalist see the extreme absurdity of any religious emotion or enthusiasm about an *It*.

Modern Indian philosophers, like Prof. Radhakrishnan, have expounded eloquently the theme that religion is not a set of doctrines, but that it is an experience. And religious experience is based on the realization of the "presence of the divine in man."

“ Dogma divides and sows enmity. Experience unites and makes concord. Dogma needs to be proven : experience needs no proof. It is a fact. ”

“ Alas ! The experience may be a fact, ” says Prof. Gilbert Murray in his *Stoic Christian and Humanist*, “ but the interpretation of experience is something different. What we mean by ‘ the divine in man ’ is, I fear, merely the same thing as the human in God ; some sublimation of the highest human qualities which we have projected from ourselves on to the image of this intractably anthropomorphic God created by our man-thinking and wish-thinking. It is our own dream returning to us in the guise of an external being. . . .

“ We build our conception of the divine out of what we take to be the best that we know or can imagine from our experience. What theists call ‘ the goodness of God ’ and mystics ‘ the divine in man ’ is precisely man’s *humanitas*, the quality which specially exalts him above the beasts and progressively raises him higher and higher above himself. ”

If religion be a way of life founded upon the apprehension of sacredness in existence ; if, as is the case, the human consciousness be not satisfied with the mere experiencing of sacredness and mystery, but attempts to link this up with its faculty of reason and its desire for right action, trying on the one hand to comprehend the mystery and to explain the reality which it still feels sacred, and on the other to sanctify morality and make right action itself a sacrament ; if this linking up of rational faculty and morality with the specifically religious experience of holiness has resulted in organizing the external ground of religion as what is usually called God ; and if, finally, there be no reason for ascribing personality or pure spirituality to this God, but every reason against it ; then religion becomes a natural and vital part of human existence, not a thing apart ; a false dualism is overthrown ; and the pursuit of the religious life is seen to resemble the pursuit of a scientific truth or artistic expression, as the highest of human activities, success in which comes partly from native gifts, partly from early training and surroundings, partly from sheer chance or sudden psychic change, and partly from continuous personal efforts.

Thus is ended the Exposition entitled “ The Illusory World ” in the *Kalyana Magga*, or “ The Path of Happiness. ”

KARMA AND CHARACTER

(1) *Fatalism or Free Will?*

PHILOSOPHERS have, for ages, made a fundamental distinction between a reality and an appearance, and, to aid our thought, have familiarised us with the terms *noumenon* and *phenomenon*. Let it be granted that there is a perceiving self towards which is brought a thing as an object of perception—something to be known: this is the “thing in itself,” reality, the *Noumenon*. Let it be admitted also that, if the means of perceiving it are perfect, it will be known exactly as it is; but if, on the other hand, the perceptive faculties of the self be imperfect, the thing will be known only as it appears, that is, imperfectly. This appearance is called the *Phenomenon*.

The Buddha was one of the first, if not the very first, to give due consideration to this problem; and with very good reason: because it was urgently necessary that a man, wishing to live this life with a minimum of suffering, should estimate accurately the nature and value of his experiences. In reflecting on these experiences he would observe that they come to him from his association with the visible world; that his mental states were dependent upon his sensibility to his apparent environment; that some appearances were welcome and others not—so that he would be led to look closely into the processes by which he came by them, or could escape from them. This study is set forth in Buddhist psychology, which we shall shortly examine.

In the Buddha's time many speculations were rife as to the origin of the universe; and, according to the conclusion adopted, so was the ethical doctrine propounded. The Buddha, however, deprecated such discussion, and put forward what can best be described as the Aryan Positivist religion. It was not our duty to spend our time and energy in metaphysical inquiries, but to live; He did not assume that the universe had been brought into existence by a Deity—such a God was beyond His knowledge—and He thought that no system of morality should be founded on such a speculative basis.

“Because Buddha demands love of humanity and discipline of mind independent of a religious sanction, there are people who exclaim that Gautama Buddha was the Positivist Auguste Comte

born 2000 years too soon," says Prof. Radhakrishnan in *Indian Philosophy*. True Buddhism, theoretically stated, is humanitarianism, meaning by that term something very like the gospel of humanity preached by the Positivist, whose doctrine is the elevation of man through man—that is, through human intellects, human intuitions, human teaching, human experiences, and accumulated human efforts—to the highest ideal of perfection.

The humanism that the Buddha preaches has nothing to do with the humanism of Dr. Irving Babbitt, Dr. Paul Elmer More and other modern humanists. Its chief tenet is faith in the supreme value and self-perfectibility of human personality. It rejects revelation and the supernatural. Improvement comes from within. No man or God can save another man. The ideas of prayer and worship are declared to be unimportant, and it is denied that "the chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever."

The humanism of the Buddha is altogether a more humble, more fundamental and more dynamic doctrine than that of the Babbitt-More school of thought. The Buddha's humanism is more humble in that it affirms not only the possibilities of man, but also his limitations. It is more fundamental in that the Buddha was the first to propound a doctrine which involved a complete shift in the direction and movement of human thought. Living in an age in which even the more daring and sophisticated of philosophers were either still dominated by the myth-complex, or hopelessly involved in a tangle of abstract theories in their attempt to explain the burden and mystery of things, He emphasised the intelligibility of all phenomena. By so doing He shifted the focus of human awareness from the mythological and the abstract, to the objective and the real.

He did more. It is always easy to apply dispassionate analysis to the world that is external to ourselves, the "otherness" which surrounds us. It is far harder to apply similar analysis to the world of one's own subjective experience and to reduce its baffling complexities to an intelligent order. Yet no humanistic world-view is complete which does not envisage an "ordering" of man's subjectivity. It is precisely in this that the Buddha differed from most of His contemporaries. The task of dispassionate analysis of the innermost springs and motives of human experience was his chief preoccupation.

Judging from appearances there were, for the Buddha, four great truths which had been positively realized by Him, namely :—

1. The existence of pain and sorrow.
2. That the cause of suffering is selfish desire.
3. That pain and sorrow cease by the extinction of selfish desire.
4. That selfish desire is extinguished by leading a moral life of thought control.

These Four Truths were the first positive enunciations of the Buddha.

As with regard to the origin of the world, so with regard to human life, the Buddha did not undertake to say whence a man came ; man was simply to accept his position in the world, to regard himself and every other form, animate and inanimate, as a *compound*—“in each individual, without any exception, the relation of its component parts to one another is ever changing, so that it is never the same for two consecutive moments. It follows that no sooner has separateness begun than dissolution, disintegration, also begins ; there can be no individuality without a putting together ; there can be no putting together without a becoming ; there can be no becoming without a becoming different ; and there can be no becoming different without a dissolution, a passing away, which sooner or later will become inevitably complete ” (Rhys Davids).

Any given life, therefore, is merely one link in a long chain of causation, both ends of which are lost to us, and are not truly discoverable by speculation ; the present life, the present moment, is all that can be really known by us. Seeing, however, that the past and the future are related by the present and also how closely man's action of today is bound up with his experience of tomorrow, the Buddha urged man to gain control of his Karma at the point at which this is possible, namely, Now. In spite of the Buddha's positivism, a speculative and defeatist philosophy has grown up around this idea of Karma.

Karma, literally, means action. By pure action man becomes pure ; by evil action, evil. Every event is due, or partly due, to previous causes, and is itself the cause, or partial cause, of future events. So what is done in this life all helps to shape what happens in the next. The Buddha, as a psychologist, was quite content with the definition of Karma as volition (*Cetanāhaṃ bhikkhave kammaṃ vadāmi*). The Buddha repeats this view in : “ My action is my possession ; my action is my inheritance ; my action is the matrix which bears me ; my action is the race to which I belong ; my action is my refuge. ”

The law of Karma is a unique and characteristic feature of the religious thought of India. It is one of the fundamentals not only of Buddhism but also of Brahminism, with which the doctrine of Karma originated. The Buddha adopted and adapted it to his own teachings. But He changed the whole aspect and practical effect of the doctrine by disconnecting it from the soul-theory out of which it had grown and on which it had hitherto depended.

This theory of Karma is the doctrine which takes the place in the Buddhist teaching of the very ancient theory of 'souls,' which the Christians have inherited from the beliefs of the earliest periods of history. The transmigration of souls, very commonly supposed to be a fundamental tenet of Buddhism, has never been a part of it. The Buddha did not teach the transmigration of souls. What he did teach would, if we wish to retain the word transmigration, be better summarised as the transmigration of *character*. And it would be more accurate to drop the word "transmigration" altogether when speaking of Buddhism, and to call its doctrine the Doctrine of Karma. The Buddha held that, after the death of any being, there survived nothing at all but that being's "Karma," the result, that is, of its mental and bodily actions. Every individual, whether human or divine, was the last inheritor and the last result of the Karma of a long series of past individuals—a series so long that its beginning is beyond the reach of calculation, and its end will be coincident with the end of all human existence.

Brahminism had been in existence more than a thousand years when the Buddha began His ministry. He found the theory of Karma confused with fatalism. It had been made into an excuse for inertia and timidity, and turned into a message of despair. It said to the sinner: "Not only are you a wreck, but that is all you ever could have been. That was your pre-ordained being from the beginning of time."

The Buddha turned this message of despair into a message of hope by giving a new interpretation to the meaning of Karma. The Buddha's theory of Karma reckons with the material or the context in which each individual is born. While it regards the past as unalterable, it allows that the future is only conditioned. The spiritual element in man allows him freedom within the limits of his nature. Man is not a mere mechanism of instincts. The spirit in him can triumph over the automatic forces that try to enslave him.

The Buddha's doctrine of Karma encourages the sinner that it is never too late to mend. It does not shut the gates against hope,

the conqueror of despair and suffering, guilt and peril. We can use the material with which we are endowed to promote our ideal. The cards in the game of life are given to us. We do not select them. They are traced to our past Karma, but we can call as we please, lead what suit we will and, as we play, we gain or lose.

This dynamic interpretation of Karma brought the greatest freedom to India, and, in a few hundred years, not only ushered what historians agree is the Golden Age of India, but also strongly influenced to the good the civilizations of other lands. But, as the centuries rolled on, Brahminism, re-emerging in a new form, under-mined the Buddhist civilization of India and finally overthrew it. On the ruins of Buddhism, Hinduism arose. The result of it was that the caste system, inertia and timidity again crept into Indian society and man himself grew feeble and disinclined to do his best.

We see this fatalism, through which India became a prey to one conqueror after another, propounded in the Hindu epic, the *Mahabharatha*, which was crystallized into its present form about a thousand years after the Buddha. In it the sage Markandeya expounds the Hindu doctrine of Karma in this way: "The divine sage, addressing Yudhisthira, explained to him that happiness is to be attained neither by learning, nor good morals, nor personal exertion. There is yet another and more important factor than all these to be reckoned with, and that is Karma. 'If the fruits of our exertion,' says Markandeya, 'were not dependent on anything else, people would attain the object of their desire by simply striving to attain it. It is sure that able, intelligent, and diligent persons are baffled in their efforts and do not attain the fruits of their actions. On the other hand, persons who are always active in injuring others, and in practising deception on the world, lead a happy life. There are some who attain prosperity without any exertion; and there are others who with the utmost exertion are unable to achieve their dues. Miserly persons, with the object of having sons born to them, worship the gods and practise severe austerities, and these sons... at length turn out to be very infamous scions of their race; and others, begotten under the same auspices, decently pass their lives in luxury, with hoards of riches and grain accumulated by their ancestors. The diseases from which men suffer are undoubtedly the result of their own Karma,' that is, of their actions in previous and unremembered existences. 'It is,' pursues Markandeya, 'the immemorial tradition that the soul is eternal and everlasting, but the corporeal frame of all creatures is subject to destruction here

(below). When, therefore, life is extinguished the body only is destroyed, but the spirit, wedded to its actions, travels elsewhere. It inhabits innumerable bodies in succession, it lives countless lives, it passes through the infernal regions, it attains to the heaven of the gods ; and, after untold woes and infinite struggles, is eventually re-absorbed in the divine essence from which it sprang.' ''

Sage Markandeya's exposition of Karma shows how the ancient Hindu thinker accounted for the striking inequalities and apparent injustice inseparable from mundane existence. As to the moral responsibility of man for his actions, the poets of the Epics, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharatha*, had thought out the problem in its various aspects and despairingly left it unsolved. For as Sanjaya, the envoy of the Pandavas to their cousins, sadly says, in the true spirit of agnosticism : " In this respect three opinions are entertained : some say that everything is ordained by God ; some say that our acts are the results of free will ; and others say that our acts are the result of those of our past lives ." What God can Sanjaya refer to ? Surely it must be fate, inexorable destiny, of which he is thinking.

One can predict an individual's acts so far as they are governed by habit, that is, to the extent his actions are mechanical and not effected by choice. But choice is not caprice. Free will in the sense of an undetermined, unrelated, uncaused factor in human action is not admitted, but such a will defies all analysis. It operates in an irregular and chaotic way. If human actions are determined by such a will, there is no meaning in punishment or training of character. The Buddhist doctrine of Karma allows man the freedom to use the material in the light of his knowledge. Man controls the uniformities in Nature, his own mind and society. There is thus scope for genuine rational freedom while indeterminism and chance lead to a false fatalism.

The Buddhist doctrine of Karma, far from filling us with despair, fills us with hope. It teaches us that in the moral world there is nothing arbitrary. Just as a savage, who dreads a storm or an eclipse as a sign of the anger of the gods, ceases to dread it when he comes to know the laws of Nature, so when we come to know the law of Karma we cease to dread the arbitrariness of chance, accident and luck in the realm of character. In a lawless universe our efforts would be futile. But in a realm where law prevails we feel secure and guide ourselves with the help of our knowledge. When we know that evil thoughts entail suffering, that what we are is

the result of what we think, that as we sow we shall reap, and that we are the architects of our own fortune, we feel strong and secure.

Today, as before the Buddha's time in India, fatalism has crept into the doctrine of Karma and we are in danger of accepting a philosophy of defeat. It is a widely prevalent idea that the individual is a victim of forces beyond his control ; that his make-up and abilities are determined by his Karma or heredity ; that his happiness is dependent upon conditions outside himself ; in short, that he is anything but the " Master of his fate and the Captain of his soul. " A false view of the law of Karma has contributed towards this defeatism. This view of Karma is one that paralyses human effort and is crude and mistaken. Men should regard Karma not as a paralysing force, but as a guide.

Most people are fatalists, who believe that their fate in life has been fixed in advance beforehand, and that nothing now that they may do can alter it. When something—generally of an untoward nature—happens to us, we frequently use the expression, " O, it is my Karma ; it is my Karma, " meaning thereby " O, this is my fate ; this is my destiny. This is something imposed on me by a power beyond my control, to which I must helplessly submit. "

This concept of man as the puppet of circumstance reaches its climax in contemporary declarations of Buddhist leaders and other religious guides, who portray men and women as the victims of their Karma or as the creatures of their Creator. The Buddhist leaders say : " Man is suffering because of his Karma and he must work out that Karma. " The Church Fathers say : " Man is made for Heaven, not for earth ; so it is perfectly immaterial whether he is or is not happy in this world. " When religion is thus defined by the guides of religion themselves, Karl Marx cannot be said to be wrong when he declared : " Religion is the opium of the people. "

Thus we have evolved a complex system of ideas which, instead of helping mankind, threatens to kill the very civilization which has produced it. Pseudo-religious theories have filled our vocabulary with recipes for this defeatism. Constantly we hear such statements as : " If I am destined by my Karma to be bad or good, to do this or not to do it, it must be so ; why make any effort ? " " Personality is something you either have or don't have, " or " I suffer from an inferiority complex. "

One would often wish that the term " inferiority complex " had never been coined, because then there would at least be one

less manufactured idea for people to fear. A sense of inferiority is not a disease which mysteriously overtakes a person and renders him helpless. On the contrary, it can be of real value when the person, recognising his inferiority, seeks to improve upon it by developing superiority.

The dynamics of acquiring superiority in any field may be illustrated by an incident in our public life not long ago. The Colonial Government had introduced into the then Legislative Council a proposal to multiply the liquor taverns in the Island by having separate taverns for Arrack and Toddy which were then being sold in the same premises. The Low-country Sinhalese representative in the Legislative Council, who was then regarded as the leader of the Sinhalese, supported the Government proposals.

But there was an organised opposition to the project set up by a group of people and this opposition, which had fairly wide support, was contemptuously characterised by the Sinhalese representative in Council, who was of the Headman class, through whom the British had found it convenient to rule the country, as a movement engineered by some "nobodies trying to become somebodies."

One day, however, two of this opposition group, who stood to each other in the relation of *guru* (teacher), and *sisya* (pupil) met. "Hey ! can't a nobody become a somebody ?" asked the *sisya*. The *guru* did not answer ; he had his own thoughts regarding the matter, but the *sisya* felt otherwise. Result—thirty years later, not only did the *sisya* push the *guru* up to the elevated position of leader of the Sinhalese, but he himself succeeded the *guru* in that high office and abolished that "Headman Order" from which had arisen that arrogant Sinhalese representative in Council.

Here is the true concept of man. He is an individual capable of triumph over himself and his environment, and this is confirmed in the discoveries of modern psychology also. A philosophy of defeat makes failure inevitable, even with the most richly endowed person ; a philosophy of success, a determination to make the most of oneself, can do miracles even with one poorly endowed. The thing that matters is to see in Karma, not a destiny imposed from without, but a self-made destiny, imposed from within, and therefore a destiny that is continually being re-made by its maker. In fine, we may repeat the words put into the mouth of Cassius by Shakespeare :

" The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
But in ourselves, that we are underlings."

Man, therefore, is still the potential creator, rather than the victim, of Karma or of his Creator. He is a creature of free will and of untold possibilities, not the slave of environment. His capabilities are limited not so much by heredity and poverty or the favouritism, caprice and arbitrariness of God, as by his own vision of himself. The majesty of God and the prestige of Providence pale before this principle of Karma.

Man is not a mere product of Nature. He is mightier than his Karma and so can the law of Karma be subjected to the freedom of spirit. Karma has a cosmic as well as psychological aspect. Every deed must produce its natural effect in the world ; at the same time it leaves an impression on or forms a tendency in the mind of man. It is this tendency that inclines us to repeat the deed we have once done. So all deeds have their fruits in the world and effects on the mind. So far as the former are concerned, we cannot escape them, however much we try. But in regard to mental tendencies we can control them. Our future conduct holds all possibilities. By self-discipline we can strengthen the good impulses and weaken the bad ones.

(2) *Development of Personality*

HUMAN effort can mould Karma ; it is not a finished thing awaiting us, but a constant becoming, in which the future is not only shaped by the past but is being moulded by the present. If a man desires to be good, he is putting forth an energy which presently will make him good, however bad he may be now. A man is not a helpless being, destined by his Karma to be either bad or good, small or great, but he becomes that which he chooses as desirable—badness or goodness, smallness or greatness. He always is, and always must be, making efforts, merely because he is alive, and his only choice lies in making an effort to move in one direction rather than in another ; his quietude is merely a choice to let past choices have their way, and to go in accordance with them. He does not eliminate the element of choice by doing nothing.

By a lethargic attitude our life will become a static thing, a state of personal inactivity and inertia—an unnatural thing—and will tend to become mere existence rather than living. The duty of man to himself is to elevate himself by developing and perfecting his character ; for it is only by this process that man can achieve self-control and self-direction, which the Buddha has so strongly emphasised in His teaching.

The "Kutadanta Sutta" of the *Digha Nikāya* says that it is *character* that reappears; the being released by death reappears with the same character as before. When a man dies, two things happen: 1. The actual substance of his body—the protoplasm and all the tissues composed of it, such as brain, muscle, bone and so on: these disintegrate and in a very short time no longer exist as protoplasm, but are resolved into much simpler compounds, or even into elements, 2. His Karma, that is, the summation of his actions and experiences, constituting his character, continues. This is the Buddhist theory.

That which constitutes the identity of person in one and the same individual is only the continuity and the consistency of his character. Our future rebirths perpetuate our character, together with all its blessings and its curses, in the same way as "I" of today am benefited or hindered by my actions from the days of my childhood. The "I" of today has to take all the consequences of the actions which the "I" of yesterday performed. Similarly, a new life has to bear the consequences of the actions of the old life, and scarcely distinguishable from it in the inner characteristics, has to carry on the load, heavy or light, imposed by the earlier agent. It will be seen, therefore, that, although Buddhism rejects the Brahminical idea of a persistent metaphysical ego, it teaches the theory that a man's thoughts, aims, desires and aspirations which are especially characteristic in any one birth have the tendency to reappear in another.

Man is a compound of tissues, organs, fluids and consciousness. A man remains the same from yesterday until today, and from today until tomorrow, in so far as he consists of the same compounds; his character remains the same, exactly as a light burning several hours remains the same light, although the flame is fed by other particles of oil. The man of the same character as you, is the same as you, in somewhat the same sense as two triangles of equal angles and sides are congruent. This is tersely expressed in the saying, *Tat twam asi*, "That art thou."

Character is something which we gradually develop, each in our degree. We all develop character in some degree, and of some sort, whether good or bad, strong or weak, refined or coarse-grained. And it is in the development and perfection of character, a process which may and should continue throughout our lives, that we find the fullest scope for guidance and self-direction. McDougall defines *character* as "that in a man which gives, or,

rather, is the ground of, consistency, firmness, self-control, power of self-direction or autonomy. ”

But there is more in it than this. There is also a moral factor. Indeed, character-training and moral training are one and the same thing. The proof of this lies in the fact that appreciation of values or ideals, as, for example, justice, goodness or truth, is an essential part of each kind of training.

True life is a vital progression and an energised activity. “Life,” wrote Goethe, “is a quarry, out of which we have to mould and chisel and complete a character.” A person and his character are not the same thing, but two distinct things. Whereas a person remains radically unchanged throughout life, his character may and does alter with experience.

Knowledge is useful in the formation of character, but not essential. Education or culture therefore is important. It enables you to make the most of experience, to gather together all your loose bits of knowledge into one coherent system. If you *know* what is good and what bad, what is right and what wrong, what valuable and what trivial, you are enabled to form wise judgments and mould a good character.

Personality—so important an element in moulding character—is not an accidental gift but an achievement. People with strong personality stand out like illuminated signposts along the obscure road of life, and show the rest of us the way.

Now, what is personality, this quality of being different from most people? It is so essential to the human race that it seems worth while trying to find out more about it; its chief characteristics, and the reasons why some have much and some very little.

These personalities stand out in a crowd, in a generation, or in an era because of their striking “character” and achievements. They are made of the same stuff as the rest of us, but they seem to have grown wise to the unlimited possibilities within themselves, and have, in consequence, found a zest for life in its fullest sense. This zest helps them to achieve many things.

We all have some individuality, but many of us have not enough, or do not realize that we have in our make-ups the seed for a fine harvest of the quality. This is a pity, because if we do not bring to fruition all the individuality we have, we pass through life half-conscious, half-fulfilled, and fretted by countless fears.

Every personality was latent at first. We are outcomes of Karma, heredity and environment combined—a statement which

in no respect conflicts with the admission that our own volitions count for something in the evolution of our characters and personalities. The "Sangiti Sutta" of the *Digha Nikaya* defines four methods of acquiring new personality, to wit: "(1) in which our own volition works, not another's, (2) in which another's volition works, not ours, (3) in which both our own and another's volition work, (4) in which the volition of neither works." Expressing the matter in another way, personality is a compound, grouping, and resultant of many co-ordinated elements, some of which were inherited, some absorbed, and some deliberately acquired.

The Buddha preached a doctrine of regenerate personality, to be sought after and developed by and out of the personal resources of the individual. When the Upanishads make out that the centre and core of the human being is the universal self, or *ātman*, and the aim of man is to discover it, the Buddha insists on the remaking of character, the evolving of a new personality. But the discovery of the latent self is not possible without a transformation of the whole being. The aim of man is to become what he is. One has to grow into the self.

No moral teacher has laid greater stress than the Buddha upon the ability of the individual to work out his own salvation by his own unaided efforts. No other teacher has also laid so much emphasis on the need for self-control, self-responsibility and self-perfection as the Buddha has done. In the *Dhammapada*, the Buddha asks man to raise the self by the self:

By thine own self exhort thy self ;
 By thine own self examine thy self ;
 Well guarding thy self and vigilant,
 So shall ye, O Brethren, live in happiness.

Life's greatest achievement is the continual remaking of ourselves so that at last we know how to live. "Ye must be born again" is as true in Buddhism as in traditional theology. Every resentment that we encourage, every grudge, every despondency, every smug conceit—and, on the other hand, every self-mastery, every high fortitude, every facing of naked truth—makes either for breaking down the self or for building it up.

Self, in its higher sense of the developed personality or character, is not something we are endowed with at birth. It is something we are continually creating as we live our day-by-day life.

Whether that self shall be vapid or virile, barren or productive, a source of misery or a source of power—that depends upon the interests we cultivate, the thoughts we permit, the ideals we reach out after, the reactions we let ourselves enjoy.

W. E. Henley's phrase, "I am the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul," may be adapted to express the Buddhist idea, so as to read: "We are masters of our destiny, we are captains of our *character*"; and if we always try to improve ourselves we shall automatically enhance our personality without being aware of it. Thus instead of a conscious activity in this respect—which activity is always accompanied by a certain amount of self-consciousness—the process will become an unconscious progression and perfection. "This development, in the case of the *religieux*, was to be largely effected through a system of intellectual self-culture," says Dr. Caroline Rhys Davids in her Introduction to the *Dhamma-Sangani*. "Thrown back upon himself, he developed introspection, the study of consciousness. But, again his doctrine imposed on him the study of psychical states without the psyche. Nature without and nature within met, he was taught, acted and reacted, and the result told on the organism in a natural, orderly, necessary way. But there was no one adjusting the machinery."

The denial of the existence of a separate self, a soul, is not a denial of the real self such as actually exists in man's personality. There are no persons in themselves, but there are persons. The Buddha does not intend to wipe out the personality of man, but only the false notion of the metaphysical character of personality. Religious teaching has been distorted by a dualistic conception of personality. Man has been thought of as a creature possessing two distinct natures, physical and spiritual, either one of which could be considered in isolation from the other. The spiritual nature and its life were the responsibility of religion. The physical body and mind were the concern of various secular agencies, scholastic, scientific or philanthropic.

But the researches of recent years in human psychology, and philosophical inquiries that have accompanied them, have made it abundantly clear that human nature cannot be neatly divided into parts and labelled in those parts, 'body', 'mind' or 'soul'. It has become evident that personality is a unity which functions always as a unity; and any endeavour to destroy the integrity of that unity by attempting to deal with or understand any arbitrarily defined part in isolation, is foredoomed to failure.

Every bodily activity and condition has its mental effect or concomitant. Every mental activity involves some physical consequence. The word 'spiritual' can no longer be used to describe certain specific orders of thought or behaviour, distinguishing them from others that are of merely physical or temporal significance. All experience is spiritual to the extent that it is qualitatively discerned ; our spirituality is manifested in our power to evaluate life, apprehend it as meaningful, and so make our self-expression creative.

The Buddha takes out of life the vanity of self, which is based upon the dualism of *ātman* (soul) and Karma as separate realities. There is no duality of a doer and his doings, a thinker and his thoughts, an enjoyer and his enjoyments, a sufferer and his sufferings, an aspirer and his aspirations. There is no soul which enjoys or suffers for one's Karma. The words doer, agent, enjoyer etc., are mere modes of speech. The realities of life consist in doings, thoughts, sufferings, enjoyments, and aspirations.

There is no need of bothering about an *ātman*, but it is important to be mindful, thoughtful, and energetic in all that a man undertakes and does, for the Karma is the stuff of which a man is made. One's own personal endeavour and achievement constitute one's personality, and this personality is preserved beyond death, as we read :

“ But every deed a man performs
With body, or with voice, or mind,
'Tis this that he can call his own,
This with him takes as he goes hence.
This is what follows after him
And like a shadow ne'er departs.”

Our deeds alone follow us ; our deeds, or rather the deed-forms, are the man himself. Actions take place, and the peculiar form of every action is preserved as an analogous disposition to repeat that same action in the shape of memory-structures ; and all living beings start life as the summed-up memory of their deeds in former existences.

Our memory is there, which conveys something of the past into the present. Consciousness, under the influence of the stimuli coming from the outside world, records its own motion, the series of its states. According to Henri Bergson, the piling up of the past upon the past goes on without relaxation : “ In reality, the

past is preserved by itself, automatically. In its entirety, probably, it follows us at every instant; all that we have felt, thought and willed from our earliest infancy is there, leaning over the present which is about to join it, pressing against the portals of consciousness that would fain leave it outside.... Even though we may have no distinct idea of it, we feel vaguely that our past remains present to us. What are we, in fact, what is our *character*, if not the condensation of the history that we have lived from our birth—nay, even before our birth, since we bring with us prenatal dispositions? Doubtless we think with only a small part of our past, but it is with our entire past, including the original bent of our soul, that we desire, will and act. Our past, then, as a whole is made manifest to us in its impulse ; it is felt in the form of tendency, although a small part of it only is known in the form of idea.” (*Creative Evolution*).

Character is the condensation of the whole past history of the individual, and this history can be known, to a certain extent, by the impulses and tendencies of the present existence. Even if all the past could be entirely wiped from the brain memory it would still remain in the character. Each moment of life is a kind of creation, which modifies the character, for better or for worse. The self is being constantly re-created by the self, and this re-creation is the more complete, and the consciousness the more expanded, as the individual reasons on his thoughts, words and actions. The present character is the stored-up memory of ages upon ages of experience, and the present range of consciousness in any given individual is in due ratio to the knowledge he has acquired through those experiences.

According to Plato's theory of reminiscence, our present knowledge is a recollection of what was learnt or known by us in a previous state. One will say, no man has knowledge of his previous lives. But what man remembers every day of his life ? And lost memories, as the psychologists tell us, are recoverable. For the memory appears to be a palimpsest, from which nothing is ever obliterated. If we have forgotten most days and incidents of our present lives, it is natural that memories of previous lives should fail us.

Yet from infancy every forgotten day and hour has added to our experience, to our growth and capacity. All that a child was and did, though unremembered, is still a part of him and is knit up into his present nature. Every day and hour had its value and

made its contribution to knowledge, personality and extroversion. And some men seem to bring with them into the world a prodigious amount of knowledge. Where did Buddhaghosa gain his knowledge of the *Dhamma* to write his expositions of the teachings of the Buddha ? Where did Pascal as a child acquire his knowledge of mathematics or Mozart his knowledge of music ? How did Shakespeare acquire his amazing and almost universal knowledge of men, of language, of history and of the drama ?

Henry Ford, one of the richest men of his day and the greatest industrialist of his age, was a believer in the theory of man gaining experience through many lives. In *The Power That Wins* by Ralph Waldo Trine, we have the following dialogue:

“*Trine:* What you have just said of the little entities is most interesting ; this may explain the method, the medium, or the material whereby the cause produces the effect. For if cause produces effect, there must be actual movement of force, or material, or force-material, that actually does the work. In speaking a moment ago, I used the term ‘seer,’ and, in connection with it, I suggested that there are men who seem to have an aptitude, or a sense perception, that is different from that of the ordinary man.

“*Ford:* Well, that is experience. Some seem to think that it is a gift or a talent, but it is the fruit of long experience in many lives. Perhaps I ought to explain that I believe we are reincarnated. You, I, we reincarnate over and over. We live many lives, and store up much experience. Some are older souls than others and so they know more. It seems to be an intuitive ‘gift.’ It is really hard-won experience.....

Ford added : “ Reincarnation offers an explanation for so many things that otherwise remain unexplained. And it answers the rule that experience is the purpose of life. It is merely one phase of the world-wide and ancient belief (which was once actual knowledge) that life is continuous, that we go on and on. We *believe* that now, but there was a time when we *knew* it. Besides, it offers an intelligent explanation of the inequalities of life, of the differences in wisdom and maturity of people born into the world.”

Goethe justified to himself his constant activity as an escape from destructive powers. Belief and accomplishment were so closely allied in him that, at eighty years of age, he spoke the daring

words: "The conviction of my continuation after death springs from my belief in action. For if I continue to work ceaselessly until my death, then Nature is obliged to give me another form of existence when the present one can no longer house my spirit."

Among other Western thinkers who have subscribed to faith in this great law of cause and effect, and its attendant fact of rebirth, none has written more to the point than James Allan. In *Mastery of Destiny*, he says: "Nothing comes unbidden ; where the shadow is, there also is the substance. That which comes to the individual is the product of his own deeds. It is literally true that when men die they go to heaven or hell, in accordance with their deeds. But the heaven and hell are in this world. The rich man who abused his wealth, or who obtained his riches by fraud or oppression, is reborn in poverty and shame. The poor man who used the little he possessed wisely and unselfishly is reborn in plenty and honour. The cruel and unjust are reborn in the midst of harsh and untoward surroundings ; the kind and just are reborn where kind hearts and gentle hands watch over and tend them. Thus, with every vice and virtue, each receives its own ; each declares its own destiny."

The world, then, is not merely a battlefield where victory and defeat receive their due recompense in a future state. No ! the world is itself the Last Judgment on it. Every man carries with him the reward and the disgrace that he deserves ; and this is no other than the doctrine of the Buddhists as it is taught in the law of Karma, which is built upon the great law of cause and effect. The thoughts, actions and experiences of one life determine what kind of start it will have in the next life.

The reservoir of Karma may be said to be subconsciousness, containing the sum-total of all past experiences, not only those accumulated in this present life, but also those accumulated on the long journey from Mineral to Man. In passing, we might remark that Jung asserts uncompromisingly that subconsciousness harbours the history of the whole human race.

The Buddha viewed the "world" as well as the so-called "self" as a becoming ; a process of arising and passing away, of growth and decay, of evolution, and involution of integration and disintegration and of action and reaction. For Him "self" was a psycho-physical organism, (*nama-rupa*) ; an organism which was nothing but change ; full of potentiality for both good and evil, complex in nature and conditioned by environment and conditioning the environment in its turn. Personality was the resultant

of the actions and the reactions of this organism in relation to its environment. It was a product ; a product of one's nature and nurture, heredity and environment and character and characteristics, and, therefore, not a " real thing, " or an entity in itself. Indeed, there could neither be personality, nor self, nor individuality, in pure isolation, not to speak of its development.

Personality is the last of the great evolutionary acquisitions of Man ; it is no less true that it is the loftiest, the noblest of all. It is the most profound distinction between apes and men, and above all else gives man the right to the claim of true wisdom. Had it possessed no value, even the mechanistic philosophy tells us it would long ago have been eliminated, instead of persisting and growing to more sublime dimensions. This elimination, moreover, would have been all the easier because (as is well known) the last acquired characters and faculties are the most readily displaced ; their stability increases with length of tenure.

PERSONALITY IN THE MAKING

Mankind persistently asks, Why are we here ? Many maintain that the purpose of life is the development of personality—of the individual life. Since the days of ancient Greece until now there have been philosophers who maintain that the purpose of human life is to develop personality to its fullest possible degree ; that every child is born to bring to full stature the potentialities of its mind and body. If it fails, then the purpose of life has failed or been misused.

The development of " personality—of the individual " could never have entered the thoughts of mankind living under tribal discipline. In early tribal times men regarded the development of their community or tribe as the main purpose of life. The life and security of a tribesman depend on the life, strength, and integrity of his tribe ; without its protection he is undone, and his mentality is fashioned to its membership. If he had postulated a purpose in life it would have been the endurance or perpetuity, and betterment of his tribe.

With the birth of modern civilization, some 7,000 years ago, and the segregation of tribesmen in cities, tribal organization was broken up. Statutes and codes of written law replaced the customary automatic tribal law. The degree of individual liberty we who live in cities under organised governments enjoy represents a

condition totally new to mankind. It was detribalization of mankind that made the formulation of an individual purpose in life a possibility.

The main purpose of man's existence is not, as some think, to permit the individual man or woman to develop his or her latent potentialities, but to permit a closed society, be it tribe or nation, to develop its collective potentialities of brain and of mind as a social unit.

To many people, perhaps, this is a new point of view, and they may doubt whether the meaning we give to life should really be to develop the collective potentialities of brain and of body of a social unit. They will ask, perhaps, "But what about the individual? If he is always considering other people and devoting himself to their interests, does not his own individuality suffer? Is it not necessary, for some individuals at least, that if they are to develop properly they should consider themselves. Are there not some of us who should learn, first of all, to guard our own interests or to strengthen our own personalities?" This view, is a great mistake, and the problem it raises is a false problem. If a human being, in the meaning he gives to life, wishes to make a contribution, and if his emotions are all directed to this goal, he will naturally be bound to bring himself into the best shape for contribution. He will fit himself for his goal; he will train himself in social feeling and he will gain skill from practice. Granted the goal, the training will follow. Then and then only will he begin to equip himself to learn the art of living socially.

The development of the individual to the highest possible pitch is a threefold process, the development of the body and intellect, the development of the social consciousness, and spiritual development. The development of social consciousness is but a further phase of individual development, the realisation that Man cannot live alone, but is essentially a gregarious being, and that, as such, it behoves him to cultivate the art of living in a community. This implies not only that men and women should strive to become good fathers and mothers—good husbands and wives,—but also that they should become good citizens.

To equip ourselves with the art of living socially, we must learn to do an increasing number of things with and for other people. Then our personality expands, and as our personality expands, our happiness also expands. Emerson said: "Happiness is a perfume you cannot pour on others without getting a few drops

on yourself. " Happiness is no more elusive or intangible than is personality. It is not a gift, nor an accident ; it is something we create. Both can be raised by effort and practice, but only on one condition : the things we do must be such as to help and please others, even though we have to sacrifice our own desires in the act. Moreover, these efforts cannot be made on a rupees and cents basis. Only as we use our ingenuity and energies to give happiness to others regardless of reward may we achieve happiness ourselves.

Orison Swett Marden, in his *Good Manners*, quotes this incident : " Queen Victoria once commanded a professional pianist from Vienna to play for her and some of her children. It was her custom to dismiss the performer with a few words of thanks and a royal gift, but this musician gave her unusual pleasure. She requested him to play the national hymn of his country, and as the first notes were struck she arose and remained standing until he finished. The old man retired in a transport of pleasure ' She gave me a diamond pin, ' he said, ' but for her to pay honour to the national hymn of my country was better than any diamond to me ! ' "

Many of us are afraid to pay any unusual attention to people through fear of being misunderstood. Indeed, it is amazing how many reasons we can give to justify our habits of behaviour. The secret of a growing personality and happiness is the determination to form new habits and to embark on new adventures. Of course, we shall make mistakes and meet rebuffs, until we acquire the necessary skill and finesse. But the person who, because of fear, stops trying new approaches to people, will never expand his understanding or love of people, and his happiness, instead of growing, will shrink.

There is an incident in the life of Socrates rarely recalled by the moralists. Lecky, in his *History of European Morals*, gives this account of it : " In one of the most remarkable of his pictures of Greek life, Xenophon describes how Socrates, having heard of the beauty of the courtesan Theodota, went with his disciples to ascertain for himself whether the report was true ; how with a quiet humour he questioned her about the sources of the luxury of her dwelling, and how he proceeded to sketch for her the qualities she should cultivate in order to attach her lovers. She ought, he tells her, to shut the door against the insolent, to watch her lovers in sickness, to rejoice greatly when they succeed in anything honourable, to love tenderly those who love her. Having carried on a cheerful

and perfectly unembarrassed conversation with her, with no kind of reproach on his part, either expressed or implied, and with no trace either of the timidity or effrontery of conscious guilt upon hers, the best and wisest of the Greeks left his hostess with a graceful compliment to her beauty. "

Even small attentions are not often cultivated. The sweetest music in the world to another person, it is said, is the sound of his own name. And, yet, how often do we see the numerous self-respecting men and women who serve their employers daily being called " Boy, " " Appu, " " Ayah, " Driver, " etc. The ludicrous spectacle is often seen in Ceylonese homes of a girl of ten bawling out " Boy, " and a greybeard of sixty answering the call. How few even know the names of the fellow humans who labour in their plantations, in sun and rain, to enable their employers to live in comfort and ease? The employers know them only subconsciously and only as " Coolies, " and the families they represent they know not at all.

If the scantily clad basket-woman brought her vegetables the thought of her needy family would seldom or never occur to the august lady of the house when she bargained for a five-cents reduction. If the cookwoman's husband lay dying elsewhere, it would mean nothing to the lady. If the " appu " failed to lay the table properly, she would speak to him sharply, never thinking that the man was worrying perhaps about a sick child, a paralysed and bed-ridden mother, his two unmarried sisters, or how to make ends meet with the Rs. 25/- he received a month as his wages.

In recent years most people have become full of what is called the new social consciousness. We often hear of grand schemes which propose to give the average man a better deal. And yet, here is society at our very doors. While we are busying ourselves about new social schemes, the " Social Order " of our personal contacts remains the same. While we acquire new theories of society at large, our habit of indifference towards society at home remains unchanged. Our ideas may have changed but our actions remain stagnant. Our minds may have improved, but our " Personality Quotient " has remained stationary or has even deteriorated.

The most exquisite perfumes, the finest silks, sparkling jewellery, choicest foods and luxurious comfort are at the lavish disposal of the wealthy, whose enormous domestic staffs are denied beds—their sleeping places being on the floors of corridors and pass-

ages. In most *Walaumas* the maid's sleeping place is under the bed of her mistress. This barbaric splendour and most prodigal display of riches, side by side with extremes of poverty and wretchedness, is the "Social Order" of the day.

Not long ago, the newspapers announced the death of the Sinhalese valet of the late Sir Thomas Lipton. He was a village lad whom Sir Thomas had taken away on one of his visits to his tea plantations here, but lived to become almost an international figure, as was his master, by the way in which, along with his master and sometimes even in his absence, he entertained Royalty and other distinguished visitors who came to the "Tea King's" celebrated yacht "Shamrock." How did this once village lad attain such a position? It was only because his employer treated him, not so much as a servant or menial, as a helping friend and companion.

Many of us are cruel or bad-tempered towards our employees and domestic "helps." "I call no man charitable," said Thoreau, "who forgets that his barber, cook and hostler are made of the same human clay as himself." When we fail to be kind to all men, we destroy our own peace of mind. The jewelled pivot on which our lives must turn is the realization that every person we meet during the day is a dignified essential personality of the human family.

Whether our acts of consideration for others be large or small, the principle is the same. An employer who treats an employee as a decent human being not only creates an area of happiness in the employee's life, but incidentally receives better service which makes his own life more pleasant for himself. "Seek not happiness otherwise than by being worthy of it. Seek happiness in the joy of duty nobly done," said the Buddha. Here is a fundamental study in the art of social intercourse. Here is a religion, not of abstract faith but of human fellowship. Here is a concept of personality in the making. Here is happiness to be had for the giving.

If we were to make the conscious and frequent effort of treating others with consideration, the effect on us and on society as a whole would be amazing. Not only our personalities but the personality of the nation would rise to a much higher plane, and with it to happiness. Here is the homely road, the human road, by which we shall achieve that abundant life which all desire.

It is eternally to His credit, and to the great gain of mankind, that, while other religious teachers and philosophers had been imposing upon men all kinds of beliefs, religious sacrifices and

caste observances, calling these Dharma, or "righteousness," the Buddha taught men that they must make their Karma or life's actions identical with their concept of Dharma ; that is to say, man must realise that there is no other rule for him, no exception to the law of absolute righteousness ; and if he should attain to this ideal, his Karma would thus as a matter of fact fulfil all the demands of righteousness.

It was not for the Buddha to say, "Be ye perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect," because He had not specialised on the heavenly perfections as being transcendent ; no, these perfections, such as He knew them, having come in large part to Him, He felt safe in pointing man to "seek refuge in thyself"—thyself, the true doorway to the highest. If there have been since the Buddha's day those who have, by the culture He devised, found the Brahma, the Father, the God, He dared not postulate, let them in thankfulness revere His name and memory.

One thing at least did the Buddha, the Master, the Exalted, accomplish : He lived and worked to show that man might *rule the empire of himself*. Honour to Him.

Thus is ended the Exposition entitled "Karma and Character" in the *Kalyana Magga*, or "The Path of Happiness."

BARREN VIRTUES

(1) *Physical Courage*

Is there an absolute distinction between right and wrong? Or are moral laws really a matter of changing times, changing customs? "Even if ethical principles are eternal and immutable," says L. Susan Stebbing in her book, *Ideals and Illusions*, "it is certain that they need to be re-interpreted for every period and re-thought by every generation. Our moral beliefs, our standards of right and wrong, our conceptions of our relations to other men undergo some change as our modes of living change. This is true of the individual as he develops from the child through youth to manhood, unless indeed his growth be arrested. It is true also of men associated in groups, tribes, nations, States, interrelated States, and the world." This being so, nothing is more certain in modern society than the principle that there are no absolutes.

If civilization is to survive, our old-time virtues must be brought up to date. It is these virtues, rather than men's wickedness, which may be said to be responsible for much of the evil of our present world. If we had not been faithful, brave, contented and unselfish, we would probably still be roaming in the wilds, with only the proverbial fig leaf to cover our nakedness. Yet the continuance of our worship of these effete virtues is calculated indefinitely to keep us away from that ideal world which we are all hoping and striving to enter.

We have, in fact, accepted fidelity as a virtue in itself without considering why and to what we are being faithful. Yet life moves us relentlessly on. Its basic principle is one of continuous change and it is faithful to nothing. We ourselves, the Buddha has said, are not physically the same people from one moment to another. So that our determination to stay fixed in our loves, opinions and faiths is a defiance of life.

It is one thing to hold on, even at great cost, to what we honestly love and reasonably believe in. But there is no "virtue" in conforming to accepted standards to do what we want to do. What we usually mean by fidelity is holding on to someone we have ceased to love, a religion we have outgrown, a political principle we have never reasoned about at all, and our country—right or wrong. We have got to learn a new fidelity; unfaithfulness to what was

once right and has become wrong, fidelity to ourselves as we are today and may be tomorrow.

It has been said that the nature of man supplies the only true basis of ethics. If human nature supplies us with our basis of ethics, it is evident that Buddhist ethics will be very different from non-Buddhist ethics, whether Christian or Mohammedan. For the concept of human nature proper to a Christian, who regards man as a spiritual being created in the image of God, "for the chief end," as the Scottish Catechism says, "of glorifying God and of enjoying Him for ever," is very different from the conception proper to a Buddhist, for whom, according to Bertrand Russell, "man is the product of causes which had no prevision of the end he was achieving; his origin, his growth, his hopes and fears, his loves and beliefs, are but the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms."

"I cannot imagine a God who rewards and punishes the objects of his creation, whose purposes are modelled after our own—a God, in short, who is but a reflection of human frailty," declares Professor Albert Einstein. "An individual who should survive his physical death" is, according to him, beyond his comprehension, "nor," he continues, "I wish it otherwise; such notions are for the fears or absurd egoisms of feeble souls." "Religious truth," he tells us, "conveys to me nothing clear at all." He "cannot entertain for a moment the idea of a being who interferes in the course of events." "I see the watch, but I cannot see the watch-maker." "There is," he thinks, "nothing divine about morality; it is a purely human affair." Yet, he has a sense of social justice, of social responsibility, and speaks of "the solidarity of human things." Morals, then, you will see, do not lose their importance with the departure of God. On the contrary, they are invoked with the greater passion to occupy the vacant throne of the universe. When God has been deposed, ethics is crowned in His stead.

Virtue must be sought for its own sake, quite apart from its results. What is good, the "things meet and fit," can be known by reason, the wise man being guided by "the god within," that is, by his participation in the universal reason. There is a "natural law" which man can know and can obey, and conformity to this law is the highest good. Obedience to this law of Nature would normally bring with it health and happiness. But if it does, happiness lies in conformity to the law, not in the fruits of that

conformity. And if it fails to bring these goods, it is possible that a good man can be happy even on the rack.

"We have never understood," says A.R. Wylie, in *Our Pernicious Virtues*, "why physical courage should be so valued and rewarded in our modern life. It is as common to the human race as the sex impulse. Even in war, physical courage is being out-moded. The next great victory will be won, not by brave men with bayonets, but by some bespectacled gentleman promptly pressing an electric button and reducing a nation to the ash-heap."

"When men roamed the jungles and wild beasts ravaged the forests, physical courage was a utilitarian quality without which men could not survive. There are no sabre-toothed tigers on our streets today; and the actual calls upon the individual's physical courage are so rare that the average man goes through life without knowing whether he is brave or not.

"This is not to underestimate or disparage a quality that has been useful to man to conquer the savage world. But that conquest has been made. Now we have to go on to the much more difficult conquest of ourselves. And we need other weapons—intellectual and moral heroism."

Moral courage is not merely a virtue; it is *the* virtue. Without it there are no other virtues. All other virtues do not become virtues unless it takes moral courage to exercise them. "I have never met," said General Sir William Slim, former Commander-in-Chief, Allied Land Forces in South-East Asia, "a man with moral courage who would'nt, when it was really necessary, face bodily danger. Moral courage is a higher and rarer virtue than physical courage."

The ideal which we must recognise if we are to preserve what man has already gained is the moral hero. The world must be converted to the way of thinking of the Buddha who said on a memorable occasion: "He is not a hero who has killed many thousands in the field of battle. He is the greatest hero who has won self-control." Napoleon once remarked—and he certainly knew what he was talking about: "The only conquests which are permanent and leave no regrets, are our conquests over ourselves."

It is still true that he who overcomes himself is greater than he who takes a city. Moral values are the product of will and intelligence, which enables us to submit ourselves to discipline. Of course, man is fiercely inclined to satisfy his appetites. But he is a slave if he yields to those passions. He becomes free only when his mind, and not an animal instinct, dominates his course. The curse

of our deification of physical force is that a display of it, in the individual or a nation, can disguise a total bankruptcy in the essential virtues.

If we had any sense of what really mattered, we should regard the soldier as a self-confessed failure and a martial nation as a nation of failures. For both are shirking the real business of life, which is to live and make life possible. Nazi Germany, led by Hitler, deified the fighter not because she was a nation of heroes, but because she was a nation of potential suicides, broken under moral and emotional pressure, who knew no way out save through destruction.

From the earliest times, Indian ideals have been essentially pacifistic. European poets have glorified war; European theologians have found justifications for religious persecution and nationalistic aggression. This has not been so in India. Indian philosophers and Indian poets have almost all been anti-militarists. The soldier was regarded as an inferior being, not to be put on the same level with the scholar or administrator.

“Indian pacifism finds its completest expression in the teaching of Buddha,” says Aldous Huxley in *Ends and Means*, “Buddhism, like Hinduism, teaches *ahimsa*, or harmlessness, towards all living beings. It forbids even laymen to have anything to do with the manufacture and sale of arms, with the making of poisons and intoxicants, with soldiering or the slaughter of animals. Alone of all the great world religions, Buddhism made its way without persecution, censorship or inquisition. In all these respects its record is enormously superior to that of Christianity, which made its way among people wedded to militarism and which was able to justify the bloodthirsty tendencies of its adherents by an appeal to the savage Bronze-Age literature of the Old Testament. For Buddhists, anger is always and unconditionally disgraceful. For Christians, brought up to identify Jehovah with God, there is such a thing as ‘righteous indignation.’ Thanks to this possibility of indignation being righteous, Christians have always felt themselves justified in making war and committing the most hideous atrocities.”

As an alternative to meeting physical force with physical force, which means strife, war and bloody revolution, the philosophy of non-violence is a growing force in the modern world. It may be accounted a growing force because, despite the fact that the majority of people still believes in meeting violence with violence, the pacifist movement nevertheless makes headway, particularly amongst the young intelligentsia. Mahatma Gandhi's demonstration of

the power of Ahimsa, non-violence, during the Civil Disobedience campaign in India in 1929, had an enormous influence, far beyond India. Gandhiji believed that India could only be liberated, and mankind in general saved from self-destruction, through non-violence. He regarded it as the central teaching of religion, and thereby raised it from a political tactic to a religion.

Non-violence is not to be confused with passivity ; it is, as Gandhiji emphasised, an active force ; a spiritual force pitted against materialist forces. It is a weapon, as Gandhiji has said, not for the weak, as passive resistance may be, but for the strongest and bravest ; " If blood be shed, let it be our blood. Cultivate the quiet courage of dying without killing. For man lives freely only by his readiness to die, if need be, at the hands of his brother, never by killing him . . . Love does not burn others, it burns itself, suffering joyfully even unto death. "

The tactics of non-violence are simply non-co-operation, civil disobedience, boycott, and in industry Ahimsa stops short at non-co-operation. Gandhiji believed that a complete social revolution could be carried out non-violently by utilising all the tactics available in Ahimsa.

Violence and non-violence were for Gandhiji states of mind, and the practice of Ahimsa demanded not merely sacrifice, but the discipline and self-control of *Satyagraha*, spiritual-force. In Gandhiji's own words, " A *Satyagrahi* has faith that the silent and undemonstrative action of truth and love produces far more permanent and abiding results than speeches and other showy performances. There is no such thing as real defeat in *Satyagraha* . . . But fearlessness is absolutely necessary, the abandonment of all fear of bodily injury, of disease or death, or the loss of possessions, or family, or of reputation. "

This famous doctrine, the gospel of renunciation of physical force, had its birth in the East, its spiritual home. In turbulent times when life is insecure, injustice rife, when tyranny and violence rule the mundane scene, there is for the virtuous man no refuge save in *Satyagraha*. When the race is to the swift and the battle to the wicked and the strong, the weaker and the virtuous must go to the wall. In such times this gospel offers a peace within when there is none without.

Over outward things, so runs the *Satyagrahi* thought, we have, it is evident, no power at all, over the material elements or seasons, over chance or change, over decay and death. They are too strong

for us, and there is no logic in their proceedings. Nature is irrational; the just suffer no less than the unjust, the young die as well as the old. Nature, too, is unmoral, and has for goodness no more respect than the earthquake for its victims.

But man, man is rational, and his mind is an independent kingdom, over which material things, over which Nature herself, for all her brutal strength, has no sovereignty. From its impregnable fortress the *Satyagrahi* may look down upon, and defy, all her embattled powers. What matter her atrocities? What matter any miseries the wicked may inflict upon the good? Withdraw into the citadel of the self, and you can disdain these Satanic forces. Your contempt for them disarms them. You are their overlord and master. You become a god. 'My mind to me a kingdom is,' where I am the unchallengeable ruler.

The virtuous man has thus supreme control over his own actions. Things beyond his power are no concern of his, and towards them he maintains an attitude of calm indifference. 'Give me', says Epictetus, 'what you please, and I will turn it into a good. Bring me illness, poverty, suffering, condemnation to death—all this shall be turned to profit.' If the condition of your own heart be sound, and if—here is the hard matter—you care not whether you are well or ill, in prison or on the rack, whether your friends and children suffer and die, your country perishes, whether you yourself live or die—if you can view all such things as unconcernedly as you observe the flight of a bird or the falling of a leaf, you may, indeed, claim divinity.

Of all the gospels of renunciation, *Satyagraha* has the proudest and the grandest air. It substitutes ethics for theology. Whether there be gods or not, man is sufficient to himself, and has no need to invoke heavenly aid. 'You bear,' it proclaims, 'a god about with you.' And in this claim to self-sufficiency by a finite creature, theology discerns, and cannot but discern, a blasphemy, a monstrous and diabolic pride.

(2) *Apathetic Contentment*

ANOTHER of our highly prized virtues is Contentment. Like most of our popular virtues, contentment had an early utilitarian origin. To the feudal lord, who depended for his life upon bullying or "bribing" sufficient numbers of vassals to serve under his banner, the idea of contentment was a veritable godsend. Bribery and fear were, after all, unsatisfactory because there was always

a chance that someone else could bribe higher and threaten worse. But contentment, once beaten into the vassal's wooden heads, was bribe-proof and threat-proof.

From such beginnings the blight of a thoroughly third-rate virtue spread over men's thought, and to this very day preachers—generally the fairly well off—whilst by no means manifesting it in their own daily lives, preach it to others, generally the very poor, whom they exploit politically and religiously.

The Buddhist leader says to the down-and-out: "You are suffering for the Karma of your previous births; if you struggle, you will go down still further, and in your next birth you will be born as a bull or a horse. But if you keep quiet and are content with your lot, you have every chance of becoming, in your next birth, a Black-marketeer, a Profiteer or even a Member of Parliament."

The Church potentates in England, more anxious to please their ruling caste than their God, tell their miserable flock: "You are a citizen of heaven. Bear up your burden here, take the dole, have your beer and bacon, be content with your lot, and the Kingdom of Heaven will be yours."

"The toad beneath the harrow knows
Exactly where each tooth-point goes;
The butterfly upon the road
Preaches contentment to the toad."

The belief that the difference between rich and poor was ordained by God and must, therefore, be maintained, finds expression in a well-known hymn:

"The rich man in his castle,
The poor man at his gate,
God made them, high or lowly,
And order'd their estate."

The belief in the otherness of God entails belief that grace alone is effective in procuring salvation, and that works and a systematic cultivation of the inner life are useless. There is nothing fortuitous in the fact that the first and most ruthless capitalists were men brought up in the tradition of Calvinism. Believing that good works and the inner life were without any eternal significance, they gave up compassion and self-education and turned all their attention to getting on in the world. Borrowing from the Old Testament the sordid

doctrine that virtue deserves a material reward, they were able to amass wealth and oppress the poor with a thoroughly good conscience; their wealth, they were convinced, was a sign of God's favour, the other fellow's poverty, of moral turpitude.

The view-point, that earthly happiness is unimportant while heavenly bliss awaits the righteous poor, has been a characteristic Christian belief. It is no accident that Voltaire, who was revolted by the spectacle of human misery, should have been an opponent of Christianity. The humanitarianism of Voltaire, Rousseau and Bentham springs from a passionate sympathy with the oppressed and unhappy. They judged their suffering to be evils and, as such, calling for remedy, here and now, in this world.

Suffering did not seem to them to be a beneficent sign of divine wisdom appropriate to man since the so-called Fall of Adam. On the contrary, they regarded these sufferings—sufferings directly arising out of their poverty-stricken condition—as an outrage upon human nature, as a sign that here was an evil not to be tolerated since it could be remedied. Everywhere they saw men and women living in conditions that hindered their free and happy development as human beings, conditions that were in no small measure the result of social institutions arising from the structure of society on the basis of the distinction between the privileged and the unprivileged classes.

“Religion,” Lenin writes in *Socialism and Religion*, “is one of the forms of that spiritual yoke which always and everywhere has been laid on the masses of the people crushed by poverty. The weakness of the exploited classes, in their struggles with their oppressors, inevitably produced a faith in a better life in the next world. . . . Religion teaches such men, who work and endure poverty all their lives, humility and patience by holding out the consolation of a heavenly reward. . . . Religion is an opiate of the people, a sort of spiritual vodka, meant to make the slaves of capitalism tread in the dust their human form and their aspirations to a semi-decent existence. . . . But the slave who becomes conscious of his slavery has already half-ceased to be a slave. The modern worker, who is taught his work in the factory, and enlightened by urban life, contemptuously casts off religious prejudices and leaves heaven to the parsons and devout bourgeois, while he himself tries to win a better life here on earth.”

Devout Christians read with great approbation the sermons in rhyme written by Milton, Young and Pollock. These theological

poets wrote poems to prove that the practice of virtue was an investment for another world, and that whoever followed the advice found in those solemn and lugubrious rhymes, although he might be exceedingly unhappy in this world, would, with great certainty, be rewarded in the next. According to these moral poets, happiness was inconsistent with virtue. They loved to paint the sufferings of the lost, the worthlessness of human life, the littleness of mankind, and the beauties of an unknown world.

Mankind has hitherto existed in a form of slavery, the large mass of the people remaining poor and uneducated and content, while the affairs and destinies of the world were managed by a few people comparatively rich and educated and clever. And the Church threw in its lot with the latter. The revolt against the "rich man in his castle" and the "poor man at his gate" economics of the Church, started long before Karl Marx was born. In the revolt, headed by John Ball, of the common people of England—as reported by Froissart—one has a clear indication of both their criticism and their intentions against this "God-made" and "pre-ordained" social structure.

Declares John Ball: "My good people,—Things cannot go well in England, nor ever will, until all goods are held in common, and until there will be neither serfs nor gentlemen, and we shall all be equal. For what reason have they, whom we call lords, got the best of us?... They are clothed in velvets and in coats garnished with ermine and fur, while we wear coarse linen. They have wine, spices, and good bread, while we get rye-bread, offal, straw, and water. They have residences, handsome manors, and we the trouble and the work, and must brave the rain and the wind in the fields. And it is from us and our labour that they get the means to support their pomp."

According to the Buddha, "Contentment is the greatest wealth" (*Santutthi paraman dhanan*) or a condition of "the highest happiness" (*Sutta Nipata*). It is not the "contentment" or "happiness" of the pig, with which our present-day religious and political leaders dupe and dope the minds of the people whom they exploit. Men are not swine; they need more than food and sex to satisfy them. It is just this more that requires such careful examination. "Socrates dissatisfied is better than the pig satisfied," says J. S. Mill.

"Contentment is praised by Seers. What is it? And why is it praised?" asks Kassapa Thero in an article on "Thoughts on Contentment and Fear" in *The Bosat*. "A Buddhist answer to

both questions," he says, "is—'it is evidence of understanding, of clear seeing.' Some would sneer—'Pig's contentedness,—stagnation!' But those who object thus cannot prove that even pigs are ever content. Anyway, we are dealing now with human contentment; and stagnation is impossible in a world where nothing is static. He who is *full* is content,—he who, even for a while, is free from cravings; he who, with wisdom, maintains *balance*.

"Contentment, as praised by the wise, comes to him who is satisfied that two plus two can make but four; that effects exactly balance causes; that we get precisely what we deserve.

"He who sees this, sees that things are just right, or are in the process of righting themselves; and he is satisfied, realising that the future is his, to shape.

"This does not mean that wise contentment never seeks aught. It does seek the better balance, the best. But it sees the 'justice' of the present and, understanding values, it is not prepared to pay four of suffering for two of a joy that is mostly fictitious and certainly evanescent. That, though just, would be unsatisfactory, because it would be unskilful handling of the future. Therefore, it wisely seeks to end all possibility of unskilfulness in the future,—such a Perfection that contentment is permanent. In the meanwhile, he who sees wisely, sees *true* values, sees that the upward path is within, that nobody denies or withholds, that what is, is the right sum of what was."

Contentment is a mental condition associated generally in connexion with poverty or humiliation; but the lack of it is the same in the case of a rich man or a dignitary. People should not be enslaved by the mere ideas of poverty and riches, humiliation and dignity. These are all concerns of relativity. As long as they are concerned with these ideas, they will never attain to perfect peace of mind.

Poverty and riches are not of an absolute nature, and therefore we cannot draw an exact boundary line between them; what one man thinks to be poverty may possibly be wealth to another; and in what one man considers to be an intolerably miserable condition, another may find perfect comfort. Poverty and riches are thus of a relative nature and the attitude towards them is to a great extent subjective.

Poverty is either an evil, or it is not an evil, according to the character and condition of mind of the poverty-stricken one.

Wealth is either an evil or it is not an evil, in the same manner. Prince Siddhartha, Francis of Assisi and Mohandas Gandhi chafed under their burden of wealth. To them wealth was a great evil. They longed for poverty as the covetous long for wealth and embraced poverty as it were their brides.

Man is not at his best when he is contented. He easily becomes indifferent to the sufferings of others, and concentrates on how to safeguard his own happiness. "His contentment," says Rom Landau in *We Have Seen Evil*, "enshronds him so completely that he no longer sees what lies beyond it. Deal him a blow, and his eyes are opened as if by a miracle. Suffering becomes real to him, and he begins to discover that his fellow-men likewise suffer. Depending upon the help of others, he learns humility. Previously the idea of human fellowship lay outside his own enchanted circle. Now, he deliberately strives towards it. That only the poor know how to be charitable is more than an aphorism."

A far higher stage of evolution will be necessary before Man will be capable of learning through happiness as much as he learns at present through pain. At the present stage of his evolution, the best in him is never so much stimulated as when he suffers. In affliction, his entire spiritual being becomes sensitive and more active. At no other time is he in such a state both of spiritual responsiveness and creativeness. Suffering, which is accepted not in fatalistic self-pity, but as a challenge, does not represent weakness, but strength. It calls forth a more self-conscious manner of living.

"Certainly it is praiseworthy", says Dr. Tachibana in his *Ethics of Buddhism*, "to be contented with whatever comes to one's lot, and not to covet any more. As circumstances often oblige us to be so, this is quite necessary in human life. We cannot reach the state of perfect happiness unless we bring our coveting hearts and minds under complete or proper control. . . . So long as we do not do away with covetousness, which is the root of the evil in this case, we shall find no rest. The destruction of covetousness, therefore, is essential to the happiness of mankind."

The Chinese, nurtured by Taoism and the Confucian emphasis on harmony as the ideal, have a negative approach to happiness through a philosophy of contentment which has helped that ancient race to "get the best out of life." Dr. Lin Yutang gives an exposition of this philosophy.

Lin Yutang says: "Travellers in China, especially those who go through seldom visited parts inland, are equally amazed at the

low standard of living of the Chinese masses and at their cheerfulness. A lot of the so-called 'misery' is such, not to the Chinese themselves, but to those Westerners who cannot conceive of any man being happy unless he is living in an overheated apartment and owns a radio. The standard that measures a man's happiness by the number of buttons he presses a day is a false standard. Were it not, there should have been no happy person in the world before 1850.

"Chinese people, however, are perhaps more contented than Western people, class for class, when living under the same conditions; for, as a Chinese scholar has put it, 'a well-filled stomach is indeed a great thing; all the rest are life's luxuries.' Contentment is part of the counsel for moderation of that human wisdom which says, 'When good fortune comes, do not enjoy all of it.' Toward the achievement of happiness the Chinese have bent their highest efforts, and, like the utilitarians they are, they have always been more interested in this most tricky problem of life than in the problem of progress. Their approach to it differs from the Western. The Chinese make a negative approach to happiness through their philosophy of contentment.

"The question is always reduced in the last analysis to the question of a man's wants. A Chinese gentleman wants a number of things, but he does not insist on having them if they are out of his reach. He wants at least a pair of clean shirts, but if he is too poor to have more than one shirt, he won't mind. He wants some tall old trees in his neighbourhood, but if he can't have them, he will get just as much happiness from a date tree in his yard. He wants lots and lots of children and a wife who personally prepares his favourite dishes; and, if he is wealthy, then an excellent cook, and a pretty maid servant in red pyjamas to tend the incense while he is reading or painting. He wants some good friends and a woman who understands, preferably his wife; but if not, then one of the sing-song girls. If he is not born with such 'voluptuous luck,' he won't be sorry about that either. He wants leisure, and leisure he can have in China. He wants a secluded hut, if he can't have an entire pleasure garden. But if he can't have that, and must live in the city, he won't be sorry. He would have, in any case, a cage bird and a few pot flowers and the moon; for he can always have the moon.

"A strong determination to get the best out of life, a keen desire to enjoy what one has and no regrets if one fails: this is the secret of the Chinese genius for contentment."

Similarly, being 'contented' ought to mean, in Buddhism, being pleased. Being content with a mud hovel ought not to mean being unable to move from it and being resigned to living in it: it ought to mean appreciating all there is in such a position. For true contentment is a real, even an active, virtue—not only affirmative but creative. It is the power of getting out of any situation all there is in it.

(3) *Material Charity*

CHARITY, another of our old virtues, and one which was usually looked upon as a short cut to heaven, has also to be re-interpreted in the light of modern conditions. Too often the short cut to heaven has been a road paved with human misery, a disguise for the injustice that we mete to our fellow-men.

Charity, social service, relief, dole and alms-giving are closely allied virtues. One might even say the last four are considered as best known excuses for a display of the first.

The weak point in social service is that it does not, and it cannot, touch the heart or change the will of men. If social service is to achieve its purpose, it must be backed up by higher motives animating both the poor and those helping them.

The worst element in poverty is the sense of discontent and dissatisfaction felt by the poor over their lot. The social worker speaks of uplifting the masses, and so confirms the poor in the idea of their own inferiority.

The poor have as much feeling as the rich, and it is safe to say that the problem of poverty will not be satisfactorily solved until material relief is accompanied with contentment to the mind, until the poor man is made to feel that he is not a drag on society.

The drawback in a programme of relief is that, it may be so twisted as to become a demonstration of charity—work being allotted to men because they need jobs and not because the work ought to be done.

The so-called dole in England is a blundering but definite acceptance of a new principle. And, incidentally, it has saved England from a revolution. "At present", says Bernard Shaw in his *Guide to Socialism*, "we give the unemployed a dole to support them, not for love of them, but because, if we left them to starve, they would begin by breaking our windows and end by looting our shops and burning our houses."

Alms-giving is another virtue that is barren today. Although the Buddha spoke highly of it, it is clear he was not happy about it. Buddhaghosa quotes in the *Visuddhi Magga* that saying of the Master: "Alms-giving makes some men raise their heads, while others bow." Now, who are they who raise their heads?—the donors. And who are they who bow?—the receivers. Vain pride in the one and lowly self-abasement in the other. Bernard Shaw, the modern sage, gives in his work just referred to above an admirable exposition of the truth of the saying of the Sage of 2500 years ago. Shaw says: "Socialism loathes alms-giving, not only sentimentally because it fills the paupers with humiliation, the patrons with evil pride, and both with hatred, but because in a country justly and providently managed there could be neither excuse for it on the pauper's part nor occasion for it on the patron's. Those who like playing the good Samaritan should remember that you cannot have good Samaritans without thieves. Saviours and rescuers may be splendid figures in hagiography and romance, but as they could not exist without sinners and victims they are bad symptoms."

In the 'Graduated Discourse' by the Buddha which converted Yasa, the first section was a *dāna-kathā*, or discourse on giving, and the second a *sila-kathā*, or discourse on virtuous action. It is natural that, in the forefront of a religion of altruism such as the Buddha's, there should be placed spontaneous giving of alms or material charity as first of all the practical virtues. Along with it must be placed the first of the *Brahma-vihara*, spiritual charity or Universal Love (*Maitri*). Without the spirit of altruism, charity is a mere political convenience or, if unorganized, a public nuisance.

All religious guides, the Buddha, Christ, Mohammed and others, have extolled charity. They have held it, like the legendary carrot in front of the donkey's nose, before their followers. They were forced to do it, because they preached to societies constituted of a majority of Have-nots and a minority of Haves, with the Haves constituting the sole ruling caste. As the Have-nots had no voice whatever in the governments of those countries, the only alternative left for these Guides of humanity, to get the Haves to unloosen their rice bags to the Have-nots, was to keep dangling a cheap ticket to heaven.

This fact will be seen clearer when we consider what our position in the present food crisis would be if our Government were not constituted as it is now. If there was no rationing, compulsory

internal purchase, income tax and excess profits duty and the importation by the State of food from abroad, the position in Ceylon would be that of two million people having their bellies full and four million people starving to death.

The virtues that feed on suffering are very questionable virtues. There are people who positively wallow in Social Service institutions, Charitable Societies and Relief Funds, and the like. But of these how many act entirely unselfishly ! Most of these, even subconsciously, do so with an eye towards the "Box Office"—a para for instance in the newspaper or a mention of their names in the New Year Honours list. Yet the Buddha has said that, unless your charitable act is entirely selfless, there is no virtue in it. We throw a coin to the beggar screaming near our gate, not because we are unselfish, but because we want to get rid of the ghastly sight. Some of you may object to this, but it is true.

Joseph Fort Newton, in *Living Every Day*, gives this illustrative anecdote : Lincoln and his law-partner, Herndon, jogging along a muddy road in an old buggy through pouring rain, were discussing a point of philosophy—whether there is such a thing as a disinterested, unselfish act. Lincoln said No ; Herndon argued that there are such acts. They passed a pig caught in a crack of an old rail fence, squealing for dear life. A little further on, Lincoln, who was driving, stopped the buggy, got out and let the pig loose. When he climbed back in, his feet were muddy, his clothes wet, his hat dripping. "There now", said Herndon: "In spite of your fine logic you have proved my point. Why get out in the mud and let that silly pig out when he would have wiggled his way out anyhow?" "It was a purely selfish act," said Lincoln. "If I hadn't I would not have slept a wink tonight ; his squeal would have echoed in my dreams. He might have wiggled his way out, but I wouldn't have known it. I win the case."

In Buddhist countries, as elsewhere, the majority refuse to give up the simple idea of poetic justice. They measure charity as one might weigh onions ; so many acts of charity against so much happiness, so many sins against such penalties. For these, the future life resolves itself simply into a system of supernatural book-keeping and a matter of compound interest. By a nice balance of their acts of charity, they try to make sure that they would secure a ring-side seat in the next birth, and be placed in an advantageous position to enjoy the whole show.

An alms-giving is invariably accompanied by a *prārthanā*, a wish, that in the next life, one's table will be filled to overflowing with

all tasty eatables ; a gift of clothing is accompanied by a wish that one will be blessed with lots and lots of nice sarees in the next birth; the donor of a bell to a temple expects to be endowed with a ringing voice in the hereafter ; and nothing less than one hundred rupees is the reward expected, in the next birth, for the one cent coin thrown to a beggar. There are thousands like these who are still missing the crucial point. Like all of us, they get what they really desire and expect, not what they profess to ask for—therein lies all the difference ; ‘ Knock and it shall be opened unto you ; seek and ye shall find.’ That is a profound truth ; but much also depends upon which door one knocks at, and which gifts are asked for.

The whole trouble is that, in our day-to-day lives, we are so accustomed to ‘ balance our budgets ’, that, when it comes to a matter of making a decision to do good, we begin to speculate on the fruits of that action ; ‘ What will I get in return for doing this ? ’ ‘ How will I be benefited by helping this poor wretch ? ’ ‘ How will my own happiness be affected by this act ? ’ If, in every practical exigency of daily life, we should attempt to speculate about the results of this or that line of conduct, the opportunity for action would often be past before our calculations were finished.

“ Charity with expectation of reward is despicable and savours of trade. Action that is untainted with self is sublime,” says the *Saddhammopāyana*. Those who speculate on their charity forget the simple fact that each of us is only a part of the whole, and that when one part suffers the rest also suffer. Man is, after all, a part of mankind, and mankind is a part of Nature. Man is within, and not above, the vast symphony of environment and of all life. Man is, when all is said and done, a living animal. The noblest of his kind must bow before the laws which govern Nature.

If one is selfish enough to give only with the thought of gaining, that thought, being a selfish one, will be reflected adversely in his own life: That is the Law of Thought. Selfishness always brings unhappiness, whether it comes with gold or dross. Nature indeed is ruthless, but in her ruthlessness she at least shows no favouritism. Justice is to be had, but it is neither for those who swagger, nor for those who cringe. It must be built, on Nature’s terms, through understanding and courage. There is no event that is not numbered, that does not have its consequences.

The world would be an infinitely better place than it is or ever has been if we could get rid of what Lan Freed, in her book,

Morality and Happiness, calls the "great moral muddle." It is her analysis of that muddle, and others almost equally pernicious, which gives her book its freshness and value, and there is an important truth in her main conclusion, stated thus: "Morality says, 'Be good and you'll be happy'; (i.e. Do what you don't want to do and the result will surprise you). The amoralist will base his sermons on the text: Find out how to be happy and you will not have to bother about being good, because you will find that ultimately your happiness and that of the rest of the human family are one and indivisible."

"By their fruits ye shall know them." But there is sound fruit and unsound fruit, and only that which ripens in the sunlight of true selflessness is sound. It is possible to appear "religious," to make a display of selflessness and virtuousness, and sometimes this display may deceive, but it is not the fruit of true righteousness. This display of selflessness is, really, the display of selfishness, set out for our own ends, to gain approval and regard. Its motive is impure, and only the pure motive, that rare flower, leads to the sound fruit.

We deceive not only others but ourselves in our motives for doing things. So often we think we do a thing for selfless reasons, and then, on looking a little more closely, we find that we have deceived ourselves and that really the reason for our action is a selfish one. It is a depressing discovery. After all, we find, we are mean, competitive persons, bent upon our own ends. And, perhaps what is a more depressing discovery still, is that the motive actuating our very desire to be virtuous and selfless was an impure one. We cannot help knowing that the world looks favourably upon those whom it considers "good."

But the desire to be good, which is itself part of what is commonly called religion, is inherent in all of us, even the sorriest evil-doer among us comes at times to repent, sees the happiness that would come if he were freed from evil, and longs to be other than what he is. We all long to be something other than what we are, and it is this longing that brings us to religion. There is something in the human spirit that knows good from evil, that craves for release from evil and struggles upwards to the light of goodness. Some men find the way upwards, some die without finding it, and some find it but cannot follow it, and these last are the most unhappy.

The Buddha teaches that all genuine progress on the path of virtue is necessarily dependent upon one's own understanding and

insight ; in other words, on the "CONSCIOUS PURSUIT OF TRUTH." To his search after understanding belongs whatever dignity the human being possesses. In knowledge, moreover, we acquire power, and the more of it the more ability to meet and master circumstances.

It is this liberty to strive after truth—whether along the path of insight or within the boundaries of intellectual activity—that raises Buddhism to such majestic heights. For this liberty expresses the difference between civilization and retrogression. Civilization is the fruit of insight and knowledge. Together they blossom as virtue.

The believer in revealed religion knows that his belief is not "founded on fact," and he therefore lives in constant fear that something may crop up to shake his faith. In that spirit he will carefully avoid reading critical literature in case it should undermine his belief. The Buddhist, on the other hand, is free to open his mind to all channels of knowledge, since his concern is, not for the integrity of creeds or dogmas, but simply for the largest available measure of truth. The Buddha declared : "As the wise take gold by cutting, burning, and rubbing it on a touchstone, so, O Brethren, you are to accept My words, having examined them and not merely out of your regard for Me." (*Jñānasāra-samuccaya*).

Truth is certainly truth, and we need not be anxious about it. "Did the Almighty," said Lessing, "holding in His right hand *Truth*, and in His left *Search for Truth*, deign to offer me the one I might prefer—in all humility, but without hesitation, I should request—*Search for Truth*." There is no religion higher than truth. In the "Kalama Sutta" the Buddha says : "Do not go merely by hearsay or tradition, by what has been handed down from olden time, by rumours, by outward appearances, by cherished opinions and speculations, by mere possibilities, and do not believe merely because I am your Master. But, when you yourselves have seen that a thing is evil and leads to harm and suffering, then you should reject it. And when you see that a thing is good and blameless, and leads to blessing and welfare, then you should do such a thing."

Therefore, Comrades, let us switch off from our lives the withered virtue of charity, as we understand it, and switch to the blossoming virtue of *Maitri*. This is the ideal that is going to count in the coming world, where the State will supplant religion. What was hitherto provided for by religion, and the miracles done by the Church, will hereafter be respectively given and performed by the State.

True progress is an organic thing like the growth of a tree. We must cut out the dead wood and cast away the withered past. We have changed so often in the past that a further change does not disturb the spirit of the religion. Some of our institutions have become formidable obstacles to social justice and economic well-being, and we must strive to remove these obstacles, fight the forces which maintain effete virtues, and transform the mind of the people.

To be fair, it must be said that we are slowly beginning ourselves to face the truth. The poor are beginning to refuse charity as an outrage. The rich are recognising that they can no longer use charity as an atonement or as a means of stimulating a pleasant emotion in themselves.

The very best charity is to help a man to a place where he will never need charity. Nothing seems more useless than the trouble we take to ease the effects, when half that trouble would serve to destroy the cause.

Human sympathy is a great motive power, and no cool calculating attitude can ever be a sufficient substitute. All great advances are due to human sympathy. But we have been using this great motive force for too small and puny ends.

If human sympathy prompts us to feed the hungry, why should it not give a more forceful urge towards making hunger impossible? If we have enough sympathy to induce us to help people in their trouble, surely we ought to have feeling enough to endeavour to remove as far as possible their occasions of trouble.

Thus is ended the Exposition entitled "Barren Virtues" in the *Kalyana Magga*, or "The Path of Happiness."

THE BLIND ALLEYS OF "AVIDYA"

(1) *The Root Cause of Suffering*

THE fundamental doctrine of Buddhism is that all human misery proceeds from *Avidya* (Ignorance): and that the root cause of all suffering is man's voluntary blindness to his own inner light and to the perpetual self-frustration which is the consequence of that ignorance. "Just as in a pointed roof house, O Brethren," said the Buddha, "whatever rafters there are, all converge to the roof-peak, resort equally to the roof-peak, all go to junction there, even so, whatever wrong states there are all have root in ignorance, all may be referred to ignorance, all are fixed together in ignorance, all go to junction there." (*Samyutta Nikaya*).

The Buddha's aversion to speculation is confined to issues which are irrelevant to His ethical purposes. It is not of importance to know whether the world is a creation by a God or not, but it is of importance to know that everything has a cause; and by removing the cause the effect disappears. Suffering has a cause and, if we remove that cause, it vanishes. We must remove *tanha* (personal or selfish desire), by the observance of the "Middle Way" or the Eightfold Path. We are unhappy because of our ignorance, and, therefore, we must dispel ignorance and become wise. We shall be rid of all suffering if we create within ourselves a new light and will, and see with new eyes. We must perfect our character by a life of sacrifice, even as the Buddha tells us: "Come near, O Brethren, walk in light to make an end of all suffering."

Twenty-five centuries ago that Light was seen in India. It shone for a time and died. Men understood it not. The personality of the Teacher dominated them. When He said that what troubles us was life, they thought He meant the fact of being alive, whereas He only meant the limited conditions in which men lived. They thought His ideal was death, yet it was Life. They thought, because He taught renunciation of many things, that running away from life was the ideal. Human society rests on certain laws, certain ideals; they thought He came to deny them; but He came to build upon them.

He gave utterance to certain maxims, and they thought that, by following these alone, you could come to happiness. It is much easier to do so; to follow a certain rule blindly, instead of cultivating knowledge; to make oneself a slave instead of being free.

They took a half-truth and made a falsehood of it. They built the spire while the foundation crumbled.

"The root cause of all suffering," said the Buddha, "is *avidya*," being without knowledge; and the deeper we probe into those subtler and more mysterious realms where the manifold happenings of life are fashioned, the more clearly shines forth the truth of this simple saying. All the discontent and disorder which now afflict our social and economic life, as well as all personal suffering, may be traced to this source. Well may we pray with the old Egyptian priest: "Ignorant am I, Ignorant as Actor, Ignorant as Ego, born into Ignorance. Lift me from the Ocean of Ignorance, O! Lotus-Eyed: destroy all Ignorance, O! Destroyer."

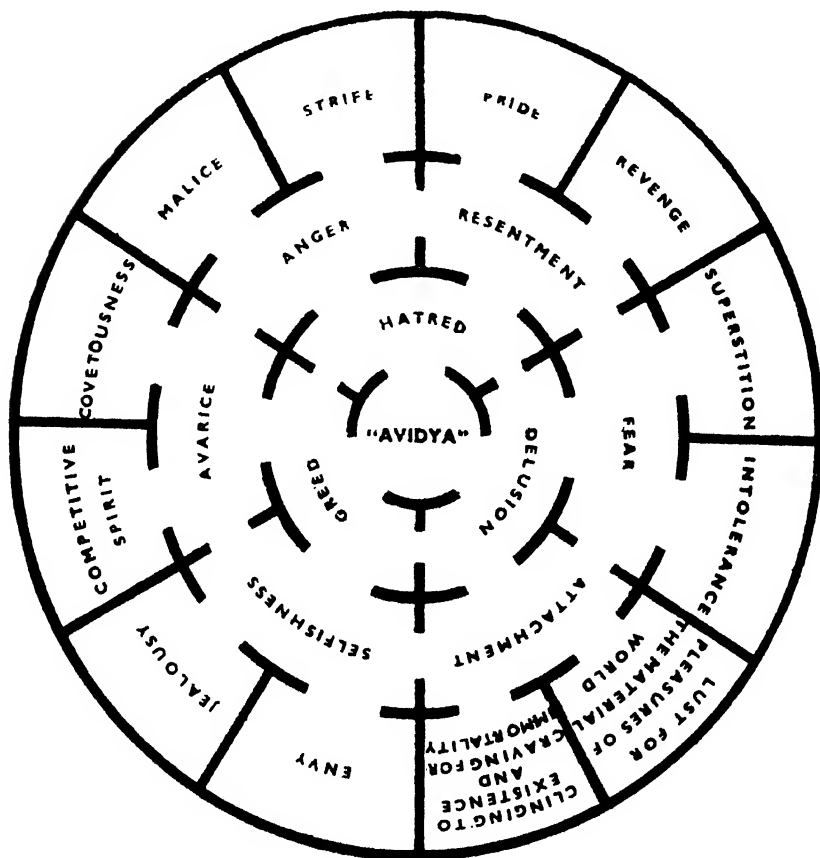
Ignorance is the most potent factor in setting limitations to the happiness of the majority of mankind; and so the great mass of people continue to live their little, dwarfed and stunted lives, simply by virtue of the fact that they do not realise the larger life to which they are heirs. They have never as yet come into a knowledge of the real identity of their true selves.

Avidya hides the nature of life; it is the cause of egoism, or the I-sense, and, therefore, the true cause of misery. The ultimate root of all suffering is the delusion which conceals from man the true being and the true value of the system of the universe. Ignorance makes the individual feel himself to be separate from the rest of existence, unrelated to the order of the world. We cling to our little self, struggle hard to perpetuate it and continue it through all eternity. "Men overlook the fact that they are really no more separate than a bubble in the foam of an ocean wave is separate from the sea, or than a cell in a living organism is separate from the organism of which it forms a part," says Rhys Davids in *The Religious Systems of the World*.

He who fails to see the link between one life and another, or speaks of it as an "airy nothing," still holds to the illusion of self. He who abandons the idea of self must recognise the sameness of two lives consisting of the same *sankharas*. Man has not yet realised that each individual is but the individualization of the Universal or the Deathless (*Amata*). Vasubandhu, the Buddhist commentator, explains individuals as the imperfect reflections of the Universal. The dictum, "No man liveth to himself," is a truism requiring no emphasis or illustration. Its truth is recognised because humanity is fundamentally an organic unity, so that the life of one member of society necessarily has repercussions on the lives of other members of society.

Avidya is the originator of the basic negative thoughts of Greed, Hatred, and Delusion. Thoughts arising out of greed, hatred and delusion not only lead into blind alleys but react on us. Greed, hatred and delusion give birth to several accessory passions—viz., selfishness, avarice, anger, resentment, fear and attachment.

THE BLIND ALLEYS OF "AVIDYA"



These negative thoughts lead to blind alleys. Here we see greed pass into selfishness, selfishness into envy ; hatred pass into resentment, resentment into revenge ; delusion pass into fear, fear into superstition. The master-passions : Greed, Hatred and Delusion, and their offspring passions—selfishness, avarice, anger, resentment,

fear and attachment—become manifest in the potent evil passions of envy, jealousy, the competitive spirit, covetousness, malice, strife, pride, revenge, superstition, intolerance; lust for pleasures of the material world, clinging to existence and craving for immortality. These negative thoughts react on their originator and, materialising in his own life, involve him in suffering.

Life, to the Buddhist, is a reign of law, and no being or force in heaven or earth, not even God, can stand between a man and the consequences of his acts. There is a law in physics that "action and reaction are equal and opposite." Buddhism points out that the same applies on all other planes of consciousness, including the moral realm. When a man throws a stone into a pond, the ripples spread to the margin of the pond, and then return—to the point where the stone struck the water. So an act will return to its doer, for the effect was inherent in the cause, and like the two sides of a coin they are inseverable. We are, in brief, the sum total of our own past thought, feeling and action.

The thoughts that create the required conditions for suffering are those which bring into our consciousness feelings of greed (*lobha*), selfishness (*mamata*), envy (*usūyā*), jealousy (*issā*), avarice (*macchera*), the competitive spirit (*ussukatā*), covetousness (*abhijjhā*), hatred (*dosa*), anger (*kodha*), malice (*vyāpāda*), strife (*vivāda*), resentment (*paṭigha*), pride (*māna*), revenge (*upanāha*), delusion (*moha*), fear (*bhaya*), superstition (*silabbata-parāmāsa*), intolerance (*akkhamā*), attachment (*upādāna*), lust for pleasures of the material world (*kāmā-tanha*), clinging to existence (*bhavā-tanha*), and craving for immortality (*vibhavā-tanha*), all being emotions that flourish on the soil of *avidya*.

The man who thinks evil thoughts creates an entirely different atmosphere from that created by positive thoughts. Science has not yet quite reached the stage of being able to measure the atomic distinctions between good and bad thoughts and their effects. In this respect Buddhism takes us further than science. In modern psychology, too, the reality and the weight of these distinctions are already beginning to be recognized.

All science is based upon the law of cause and effect. This simple principle governs the whole universe, gods and men, heaven and earth. Science agrees that "action and re-action are equal." The similar law that action and reaction are equal in the realm of moral action has a certain awe-inspiring simplicity, like the law of universal gravitation. The Buddhist doctrine is that Karma is "cumulative"; that it is something that is accumulated day by day

and year by year by our little acts and our secret thoughts, almost like the physical momentum that one gains or loses by little acts, hesitations and delays. This Karma carries one along toward a future situation—eventually to happiness or to sorrow. The Buddha Himself states it in plain psychological terms when He says in the opening verses of the *Dhammapada*:

All that we are is the result of what we have thought:
It is founded on our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts.
If a man speaks or acts with an evil thought,
Pain follows him,
As the wheel follows the hoof of the ox that draws the cart.

All that we are is the result of what we have thought:
It is founded on our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts.
If a man speaks or acts with a pure thought,
Happiness follows him,
Like a shadow that never leaves him.

This teaching conceives moral actions to be almost as real as physical actions. The sum of such actions acting on the persons themselves and on fellow human beings, would produce the momentum of human events, and determine the future situation of the human world and of the individual selves. Evil breeds sorrow and good breeds happiness, as inevitably and as accurately as one billiard ball sets another rolling at a particular angle, and with a particular force. This is the theory of moral responsibility in all human acts and thoughts, and this also is Buddhism in a nutshell.

If there were no fixed laws in Nature, there would be no science and, equally, there would be no life. It is impossible to imagine the state of chaos which would result if, for instance, our planet did not follow the strict laws of the solar system; or if thought itself were not subject to the law of fixation. But with the exact fixity that the earth follows her pattern in the solar system, so do our lives follow the pattern of our thoughts.

Therefore, as our thoughts are, so shall we become. This also is an inevitable law. Every mental condition records itself in the body sometime, somewhere. The creative activity of mind, accepting the thought of man, works steadily to reproduce that thought, whether it be for man's weal or his woe.

This great law of action and reaction permeates the whole of human conduct. The corollary of this law, that action and reaction are equal, is the basis of the natural justice that rules this

world. This corollary is called by some : 'The Fundamental Theory of Universal Balance, or Justice.' According to the Buddha, it is : "*Yadisam vapate bijam tadisam harate phalam.*" "You will reap the harvest of the seeds you sow." In the figurative language of the Christian Bible, it is : "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

Deep in the heart of every thoughtful man and woman, there is the instinctive feeling that, somehow or in some way, our future is determined by our thoughts. This belief has been popularly expressed in that familiar saying:

Sow a thought and reap an act ;
Sow an act and reap a habit ;
Sow a habit and reap a character ;
Sow a character and reap a destiny.

This profound feeling is undoubtedly true, and confirms the Buddha's teaching that our suffering, or freedom from suffering, results from our actions originating in our own thoughts.

The mind is not only the originator of our actions, but it is also the creator and controller of our reactions, and, in our daily life and contacts, it is our reactions to our own negative thoughts, to those with whom we have to deal, to circumstances and occasions, that matter more than anything else.

Conscious creation of patterns gives us the choice to use our power, either negatively or positively. The creation of a pattern detrimental to another person works against ourselves in a two-fold way—we not only create a personal fate from which there is no escape, but in working thus against the whole, we suffer through the reaction, on the collectivity of which we ourselves are a part. We cannot hurt another without hurting ourselves. The justice of the creative powers of the universe will not allow a part to be hurt without retribution.

Once thought-substance has been differentiated, we are responsible for the use and misuse to which we put it. Ignorance of this law does not save us from its reactions. If a man, through ignorance, burns himself with electricity, the harm done lies not with the electricity, but with the man's ignorance of its power.

The cause of a thing lies in its thought-patterning; once we have fixed the cause, the effect must inevitably follow, either in this life, or at some other point in the continuum. If, therefore, the purpose of our pattern is not in harmony with the whole, and contains

thoughts of selfishness, envy, hatred, malice, jealousy or fear, we are using the creative force negatively, and must expect in return negative and unsatisfactory results.

Not religion alone but science too teaches the same thing. Physicians and Psychiatrists are now demonstrating that the "deadly sins" are really major errors in the technique of living. The giant emotions, the destructive ones, which religion refers to as deadly sins—anger, hatred, fear, lust, cruelty, pride—all are deadly poisons. They poison us, and they poison life and the world about us.

"When envy, hate, fear are habitual," says Dr. Alexis Carrel, "they are capable of starting genuine diseases. Thought can generate organic lesions. Moral suffering profoundly disturbs health. Businessmen who do not know how to fight worry die young. Those who keep the peace of their inner self amid the tumult of the modern city are immune from nervous and organic disorders."

Your persistent fear is a persistent paralysis. Your anger and hatred today will make some life or lives darker—but chiefly your own life—just as your tolerance and kindness this morning may affect the outlook and condition of persons you are hardly aware of, and certainly will affect your own condition, incalculably for good.

There is a growing recognition of a new branch of medical science called *Psychosomatics*. This word will not be found in many dictionaries and is just beginning to enter the layman's vocabulary, but it is less formidable than it looks. A compound of *psycho* (pertaining to the mind) and *soma* (the body), it describes the juncture of psychiatry and medicine in the treatment of disorders caused primarily by emotional disturbances.

Everyone knows that emotions produce acute physical reactions. Today, the emotions are regarded as the primary cause—or as a precipitating or aggravating factor—in many cases of bronchial asthma, hay fever, hypertension (high blood pressure), arthritis, heart disease, rheumatic disease, diabetes mellitus, the common cold and various skin conditions such as hives, warts and allergic reactions.

This is not a new discovery, but rather a reaffirmation of the ancient principle, that the mind and body are interactive and interdependent, discovered beneath the Bo-tree 2500 years ago.

"It was not the fact of *dukkha*, nor the fairly obvious conditions of birth and so on, leading up to it, that come as a revelation to each Buddha, beneath his Bo-tree," says Rhys Davids in the Introduction to the *Maha Nidana Sutta* (Dialogues of the Buddha),

"it was the process of *samudaya* and *nirodha* as a natural and universal law. 'Coming to pass! coming to pass! At that thought there arose in me a vision into things not called before to mind, and knowledge arose, insight, wisdom, light arose. Not uncaused and casually, nor by the fiat of Brahma or any God—did events happen, painful or otherwise; events came impelled by preceding conditions, causes that man could by intelligence and goodwill study and govern, suspend or intensify.'"

The world has taken long to awaken to the fact that Mental Law promotes its happiness much more than physical law does. He would be unbalanced who would seek to deny the marvellous blessings flowing from the discovery of the laws of physics, chemistry and the other sciences. But these blessings fade into insignificance in the presence of the gigantic results possible through mental science.

Man's progress from the cave to Hiroshima has resulted from his discovery of physical law, and his subsequent use of it. Who can deny that progress has not been made? Think of the cave-man shivering in his ancient rude abode and the modern man in his luxurious air-conditioned house. Then, again, visualise the Primates who appeared as forest creatures related to groups of the Insectivora. "They commenced arboreal," says H. G. Wells, "and, as the usual increase in size, weight and strength occurred, they descended perforce to ground level, big enough now to out-face, fight and outwit the larger carnivores of the forest world. Their semi-erect attitude enabled them to rear up and beat at their antagonists with sticks and stones, an unheard-of enhancement of tooth and claw." Compare this with the so-called civilized man of today who is able to hover above the skies and, dropping a single atom bomb, destroy a whole city of half a million people.

Man is primarily a thinker, and can never be content with mere animal comfort. Now the voice of the thinker is being heard. He has recognized the fact that his mental world is governed by law just as truly as his physical world is, and he is making serious efforts to uncover and use Mental Law. Just as he found to his delight that the proper use of physical law has increased his physical comfort, so he is rediscovering that the proper use of Mental Law multiplies his mental and spiritual comfort.

"This huge world of life and motion, which is always becoming, always changing, growing, striving, has yet a law at the centre of it," says Professor Radhakrishnan in the chapter on 'The Ethical

Idealism of Buddhism ' in his *Indian Philosophy*. "This is the main distinction between early Buddhism and Bergsonism. To Bergson life means the absence of law, to Buddha all life is an illustration of a general law. The Buddhistic conception of life and law lights with its splendour the discoveries of science and gives meaning to the deepest instincts of man. The certainty of law is able to lift the awful weight which the suffering of life has laid upon the human spirit and fills the future with hope, for the individual can reach beyond the struggle and suffering inseparable from life if only he strives for it."

(2) *Knowledge the Road to Salvation*

THE Buddha taught that our suffering, or freedom from suffering, results from our actions in word, deed and thought. Where actions are the outcome of negative thoughts of Greed (*lobha*), Hatred (*dosa*), and Delusion (*moha*), there suffering ensues; where actions are free from such destructive thoughts and are the outcome of positive thoughts of *Alobha* (selflessness), *Adosa* (love), and *Amoha* (wisdom), there will be happiness.

If man would put an end to suffering, he must put an end to his own insatiability, enmity and stupidity. "In this respect, Brethren," said the Buddha, "verily one may rightly say of me—the Tathagata teaches negation, the Tathagata teaches renunciation; for certainly, Brethren, I teach renunciation—the renunciation of greed (*lobha*), the renunciation of hatred (*dosa*), the renunciation of delusion (*moha*), as well as the renunciation of the manifold evil, unwholesome conditions of the mind." If in every religion the path to perfection is a staircase ascending up to the nebular and hazy heavens, in Buddhism alone it is a slope leading down to the solid depths of reality. To the Buddhist, "not-doing" is the most difficult of deeds. "To him," writes Dr. Dahlke, "the spool of life revolves in the reverse direction, unrolling the thread until it has emptied itself."

The Buddha sets forth, as the cause of suffering, not the world, but a certain relationship towards the world. Greed, hatred and delusion that arise because of ignorance and *tanha* in its three-fold forms of: *kama-tanha*, lust for pleasures of the material world; *bhava-tanha*, clinging to existence; and *vibhava-tanha*, craving for immortality—are the cause of all suffering.

Professor C. E. M. Joad, in his *The Story of Civilisation*, says:—
 "In the sixth century before Christ, there arose in India and China three great teachers who tried to make men understand that it was important to do what was right for its own sake, quite apart from whether there was a God or not. Of these the most important was Gautama Buddha.....

"Buddha taught that all man's unhappiness comes from wanting the wrong sort of things, the pleasures that money can buy, power over other men, and, most important of all, to go on living for ever after one is dead. The desire for these things makes people selfish, he said, so that they come to think only of themselves, to want things only for themselves, and not mind overmuch what happens to other people. And since they do not get all their wishes, they are restless and discontented. The only way to avoid this restlessness is to get rid of the desires that cause it. This is very difficult; but when a man achieves it, he reaches a state of mind or soul which is called Nirvana, which is a state of perfect quiet and calm."

Nirvana is not the state of world-negation (any more than it is world-affirmation), but that of "freedom from greed, hatred and delusion" (*Anguttara Nikaya*). Greed, hatred and delusion are the impermanent elements of that subjective world which must be brought to an end, or the sterilisation of unhappiness cannot be attained. The whole problem of unhappiness, and salvation from suffering, therefore, turns entirely upon man's actions, in the three-fold forms of word, deed and thought. For, says the Buddha, "It is in this fathom-long perishable body, with its perceptions and its ideas that, I declare, lies suffering, and the cause of unhappiness, and the cessation of suffering, and the course of action that leads to the cessation of unhappiness." When asked what was Nirvana, Sariputta, whom we can trust to have held a well-grounded opinion on the matter, answered: "Nirvana is the extinction of ignorance, greed and hatred." (*Samyutta Nikaya*). The venerable disciple of the Buddha could even have omitted the last two terms, for ignorance alone begets greed and hatred, and, with its liquidation, greed and hatred cannot find any footing or nourishment.

The Buddha's idea of salvation is ultimately based on Knowledge (*vidya*), and knowledge is to Him the recognition of the nature of things. We are confronted with evil and find the root of all evil in the waywardness of our heart. There is the notion that

our inmost existence is an ego-entity, but this is an error ; it is the illusion of self, for the preservation of which we are so anxious. Selfhood is the source of vanity, enmity and sin. There is no moral wrong that has not its ultimate root in selfhood. Individuality born of *avidya* is the crux of all suffering and the source of all sin.

Avidya is much more than mere lack of information on this or that subject. It includes ignorance of the real nature of things, a mistaken notion of ourselves and our relation to other beings, it is more than an absence of correct belief ; it is something entrenched in our nature which must be eliminated and replaced with knowledge which leads to understanding—understanding of self, understanding of others, understanding of the laws of Nature, understanding of the order of the universe, recognition and understanding of happiness.

The Buddha based His entire philosophic theory upon the affirmation of a moral nature in man which has the right to make certain definite demands. Starting with the moral nature of man, He built a philosophy which would satisfy the demands of this nature.

This moral law, likewise, implies the existence of a moral world order in which man can put his faith. Having the moral law within himself, man is justified in assuming that the world is such that the demands of this law can be met.

Therefore, man must become intelligent, must know what is right and do it because it is right. Buddhism is a religion of conduct, not of belief ; faith alone is not sufficient. By their fruits ye shall know them. And we have here a religion that is intellectual, rather than emotional. The cause of suffering is selfish desire: this desire is due to ignorance. The ignorant man cannot be good. Being free, not forced by some outside authority, man must know the moral law and its implications, and must at all times govern himself accordingly. Mere respect for the moral law is not enough. Man must act. Therefore morality, goodness, is not a state to be attained once and for all, a condition of eternal blessedness, but is a continuous struggle of the intelligent individual to act in every situation so as to meet the requirements of the moral law.

It is Hegelian idealism in which the evolution of the idea is accomplished by a ceaseless movement of oppositions. Every idea embodies an aspect of the truth and takes us into its opposite, which is also a partial truth. Out of the conflict between the two, a new and higher idea arises, producing a new opposite and conflict. This process of thesis, antithesis and synthesis goes on until the goal

which embodies the whole truth and nothing but the truth is reached. "Ignorance" (thesis) is the prime cause of all evil and suffering, according to the Buddha ; when this state of mind becomes conscious, ignorance tends to change to "non-ignorance" (antithesis) ; finally, with the definite development of knowledge, we reach the stage of "wisdom" (synthesis). Knowledge (*vidya*) is a necessary part of morality in Buddhism. Love is the root of the Christian tree ; Wisdom of the Buddhist, with Love as its first offshoot.

Knowledge and experience together lead to Wisdom (*pañña*), and it is the man who is able to exercise Sound Judgment (*dhiti*), who really possesses wisdom. We commonly speak of certain men as having sound judgment, while other men, who may have brilliant intellects and much learning, are known to their friends as lacking in this quality. Every man's judgment on questions of a certain type or in a definite province is largely dependent on the amount of his experience in matters of that kind, on the amount of thought he has given to them ; and yet the man of sound judgment is one whose advice in any matter we would prefer to that of many experts, even if he has no special acquaintance with the province to which it relates.

Sound judgment is clearly as much a function of character as of intellect ; it implies a certain balance and sobriety of character. It does not comport well with impetuosity and enthusiasm ; for it requires that all aspects of the problem in hand shall be envisaged and due weight given to each one. It is the opposite of Superstition (*silabbata-paramasa*), which is misdirected reverence or irrational fear of the unknown ; and of fanaticism which sees only one aspect and that aspect as overwhelmingly important. It implies habitual restraint and deliberation before action ; deliberation not only as to means but also as to ends, and a just estimate of relative values.

Sound judgment may be shown by men of very limited experience. The man in whom it is combined with large and varied experience possesses wisdom ; especially if that experience includes much of both success and failure. The mere spectator at the banquet of life is apt to think that he sees most of the game : but only he who plunges into the stream, battles against its currents and feels as well as sees, gains experience in the full sense. For experience is more a matter of the heart than of the head. The self-centred egoist does not attain to wisdom ; for, however vivid his experiences, he is confined to his own narrow field.

Wisdom comes only to the man of Sympathy (*mudita*), and Compassion (*karuna*), to whom the joys and the sorrows of other men are well nigh as real and vivid as his own. Wisdom is not the peculiar possession of successful men ; a life of rapid and great success may bring little wisdom ; for, though experience makes a man wise, it is experience of failure that is of the most service in this respect. Hence there is often found a flavour of bitterness or Resentment (*patigha*) in wisdom; and he who combines wisdom with serenity and Equanimity (*upekkha*) has attained the highest level of human life.

With increase of wisdom our thoughts acquire a wider scope both in space and in time. The man imbued with history lives in the epoch. This does not mean that the wise man will be destitute of emotion—on the contrary, he will feel friendship, benevolence and compassion in a higher degree than the man who has not emancipated himself from personal anxieties. His ego will not be a wall between him and the rest of mankind. He will feel, like the Buddha, that he cannot be completely happy while anybody is miserable. He will feel pain—a wider and more diffused pain than that of the egoist—but he will not find the pain unendurable. He will not lose poise and self-control.

(3) *The Law of Mind*

No spiritual activity helps man so effectively to rise above what is most uncivilized in him as does Right Thought. Wrong thought on the other hand is the activity of the animal within.

Most of the forms through which life expresses itself in an organized community are the results of man's thinking. His thoughts shape his life as his hand shapes the fingers of his glove. Whether the form of his life is good or bad depends on the quality of his thought. Thought leads him to the invention of the beneficial X-ray and to that of poison gas.

The teachings of the Buddha are highly important to the world today. In spite of great benefits from the physical sciences there is no evidence that individuals are happier, that families are more united, that governments or political bodies are wiser, or that nations are less likely to go to war. Indeed, we see all around us much evidence to the contrary in the feverish pursuit of excitement, pleasure or tyranny under the mistaken impression that it can open out a more abundant life.

Can it be truly said that during the reign of science, during the centuries of its triumphant progress, we have attained a higher standard of humanity, justice, honour, or chivalry ? Is there to be found around us today an increase of happiness, any clear or certain evidence of higher and more hopeful spirits ? Has brute force disappeared, or given way in any degree to reasonableness or courtesy ? Can we assert that truth, beauty and nobility are held in greater respect than in earlier days, or that in our needs and requirements there has been any spiritual progress ? Intoxicated by the conquests of physical nature, the Western nations supposed these sufficient for all their needs, and in their exultation forgot the simple truth that man is not merely a reasoning being, that knowledge of Nature's ways does not satisfy his heart, nor a purely intellectual diet feed his moral and spiritual being, his ideals, aims, and aspirations.

"If one man conquer in battle a thousand times a thousand men, and if another conquer himself, he is the greatest of conquerors," said the Buddha. And we may at least agree that, in the interests of any form of civilization yet devised, the conquest of man over himself, over his will and passions, over his animal nature, is of no less importance than the subjugation and control of the forces of Nature.

There can be no solution of life's deeper problems, no increased happiness for the individual, through science alone. More science only adds more confusion. Unless the sciences are subordinated to the homely facts of living, they will destroy rather than liberate the minds which created them. They must be subordinated to faith, to a religious belief in certain values of life which are fundamental and which no logic can displace.

For a time, men thought that science could fill the gap left by religion. But humanity has been disillusioned. Science brings no comfort—no solace to that sense of incompleteness which is the essence of our being. Science may make us more comfortable ; it cannot make us more happy. Science performs many miracles, but they are confined to man's environment ; science does not change man. In many respects, despite the advantages conferred by scientific progress, it has heightened rather than otherwise man's feeling of dependence and insufficiency, whilst tending to destroy that spiritual support which previously upheld him.

Applied science, though it has eased human labour, has shown a strong tendency to enslave, rather than liberate, the human element. Medical science, despite the blessings it has bestowed upon

harmony of Nature are upset, destructive expressions of normally constructive Nature-forces take place.

From earliest times man has observed the rhythm of the universe. He noticed that the sun appeared every morning and pursued its quiet course toward the West in rhythmic sequence ; that the moon showed her face with rhythmic regularity ; that the tides ebbed and flowed according to a preordained rhythm ; that his heartbeat and his breathing partook of the same movement ; that physical functions in men and women had a certain periodicity ; that birds and animals mated and moulted in season ; that the earth became fertile and gave crops with unerring regularity. To crown all, consciousness, too, which lies at the centre of our being, has its pulse, shares in the rhythmic beat of the cosmic measures. Furthermore, he noticed that so long as these phenomena maintained their rhythmic sequence, it was well for the earth and for man, and that whenever this harmony was destroyed discomfort or tragedy appeared.

The same is true of our thought-life. The chief ground of unhappiness is the conflict within us of incompatible tendencies (*āsaya-anusaya*). The main condition of happiness is the harmonious co-operation of tendencies. Greed is discord, while liberality (*dāna*) is harmony ; selfishness is discord, selflessness (*pahitatta*) is harmony ; envy is discord, sympathy (*muditā*) is harmony ; jealousy is discord, altruism (*parahitā*) is harmony ; avarice is discord, generosity (*cāga*) is harmony ; competitive spirit is discord, co-operation (*sahāyata*) is harmony ; covetousness is discord, magnanimity (*mahajjhāsaya*) is harmony ; hatred is discord, love (*mettā*) is harmony ; anger is discord, goodwill (*hita-citta*) is harmony ; malice is discord, compassion (*karunā*) is harmony ; strife is discord, self-control (*dama*) is harmony ; resentment is discord, equanimity (*upekkhā*) is harmony ; pride is discord, humility (*nivāta*) is harmony ; revenge is discord, forgiveness (*khantī*) is harmony ; delusion is discord, wisdom (*paññā*) is harmony ; fear is discord, serenity (*passaddhī*) is harmony ; superstition is discord, sound judgment (*dhīti*) is harmony ; intolerance is discord, tolerance (*khama*) is harmony ; attachment is discord, renunciation (*nekkhamma*) is harmony ; lust for pleasures of the material world, clinging to existence and craving for immortality are discord, mental tranquillity (*samatha*) is harmony. Hence, degrees of happiness and unhappiness are in the main determined by the organization of our tendencies in the form of character.

It is not true that happiness is invariably the reward of virtue. For a man of unfortunate disposition and character, may maintain a lifelong and most virtuous strife against evil tendencies and faults of character without attaining happiness. But to the man of fortunate disposition and wisely-moulded character, both virtue and happiness come easily. And that organization of character which makes for strength makes also for happiness ; for both strength and happiness are the products of harmonious organization.

And so the way to get out of any conditions we have got into, either knowingly or inadvertently, either intentionally or unintentionally, is to take time to look the conditions squarely in the face, and to find the law whereby they have come about. And when we have discovered the law, the thing to do is not to rebel against it, not to resist it, but to go with it by working in harmony with it. If we work in harmony with law, it will work for our highest good, and will take us wheresoever we desire. If we oppose it, if we resist it, if we fail to work in harmony with it, it will eventually destroy us.

The Law of Thought (*Citta Niyama*) is immutable in its workings. As long as man's mental states are attuned to the harmonious co-operation of tendencies, his happiness is assured, and it brings all things his way. When discord is allowed in the thought-life, that happiness is lost and it brings suffering, pain, deprivation and desolation.

Just as in the law of electricity, the Law of Mind knows nothing but to work according to the law of its action. The law of electricity will unintentionally and impersonally kill the person who grasps a naked power wire just as readily as it will flood his home with light. Just as the one who grasps the naked wire is asking for or attracting death, because he is doing the thing which in a universe of law cannot bring him anything but death, so the one who allows himself to be saturated with destructive thought is attracting destructive physical manifestation.

It is thus that Thought becomes the agent for the execution of the Karmic law which brings to mankind the results of the forces it has generated. A deeper study of the law of cause and effect, and of the radio-activity of living forces, will show that this is so.

To those who, like the Buddhists, believe neither in God nor angels, a natural and scientific explanation can be given of this phenomenon. Thoughts are not simply abstract ideas having no external characteristics. They have been demonstrated to possess concrete form and shape ; and deep, strong thoughts have even been photographed.

A French scientist, Professor Baraduc (quoted by Eustine Cyril Goolden) has invented a highly sensitive instrument which registers thoughts and records their wave-length. One experiment the scientist made was with his walking-stick. Sitting before his instrument, he mentally visualized the stick (this being an object with which he was most familiar), and with all the power he could command he concentrated his thoughts on the stick. His photographic plate when developed revealed a perfect replica of the walking-stick. The stick itself was not within the ambit of the plate. Only his thoughts, concentrated on the stick, were projected on to the plate. It was therefore the picture of the stick, as formed in the mind of the scientist, that took shape on the plate. Thus Baraduc demonstrated that thoughts are concrete, and that they can strike a mind as surely as a rifle-bullet can strike a physical body.

When a man of great intelligence approaches one of Professor Baraduc's highly sensitive instruments, Goolden writes, "it records a high frequency of vibration. When a man of lesser intelligence approaches, it records a correspondingly lower frequency of vibration."

(4) *Greed, Hatred and Delusion and their Offspring*

GREED, Hatred, and Delusion, are regarded in Buddhism as depravities (*kilesa*), fires (*aggi*), bonds (*samyojana*), and the root of all moral evil (*akusalamula*). They are not only the root of moral evil, but, also, the cause of all the misery of life. As long as we harbour these three potent passions we cannot be expected to be free from suffering. Of the three evils, the evil of the most obstinate nature to be destroyed is the first one, or greed. This is the evil of all evils. The complete destruction of this single evil amounts to attainment of Nirvana, and "one who is free from covetousness is a Buddha" (*Sutta Nipata*). All sorrows can be removed by the removal of all grasping tendencies. Just as a silk-worm draws out its cocoon thread to its own destruction, so does the miserable man of ignorance draw desires and longings from the objects of sense. He is wise, indeed, who considers all objects as fire and withdraws himself from them.

EGOISM AND EGOTISM

The Buddha was not only a social reformer, but he was a reformer of men as well. He felt most intensely that suffering was bound

up with Selfishness (*mamata*), and he preached a moral and mental discipline designed to root out the conceit of self.

Man thinks selfishly. His first thought is for self—for “me and mine.” He will give his life for his loved ones, simply because they are “his”—part of “me and mine”. No matter what may occur, his first thought is:—“How am I going to benefit from this?” or, “Where do I come in?” His great idea in life is to stop others from getting that which he wants for himself, and to make sure that he and his are comfortably circumstanced. If others have to go short in consequence, it may be a pity, but it cannot be helped. After all, it is every man for himself and the devil take the hindmost. It always has been so, and always will be, and so on.

A basic cause of bad temper is selfishness. Where a man becomes egocentric, self-centred, and his interests are entirely in himself, he loses all sense of perspective, repels others and poisons himself. Because he is selfish and lives only for himself, he thinks every other man his rival; he is envious of their success, covets their possessions, is irritated by their happiness, jealous of their loves, and thoroughly unsocial in all his reactions.

Selfishness is caused by imperfect understanding and consequent confusion of the bounds of individuality. Unselfishness is the result of the right perception of the truth. The true good is attainable only by a suppression of the subjectivity of self and the development of the universal consciousness. It is a sublimated selfishness that tells us that we should give up our selfish craving. Compassion for the suffering of others is the impelling motive of altruism. We are all comrades in suffering, subject to a common doom.

It should be our endeavour, therefore, both in education, and in attempts to adjust ourselves to the world, to aim at avoiding self-centred passion and at acquiring those affections and those interests which will prevent our thoughts from dwelling perpetually upon ourselves. The man who can centre his thoughts and hopes upon something transcending self can find a certain peace in the ordinary troubles of life which is impossible to the egotist.

The Buddha taught the non-existence of the self, and understood by self the *ātman* (soul) of the philosophers of His time. Again and again He inculcates the emphatic injunction that the illusion of self must be overcome. The illusion of self is the secret cause of all selfishness; it begets all those evil desires; covetousness, greed of power, and lust, of which man must free himself. As soon

as the illusion of self is overcome, we cease to think of injuring others for the benefit of ourselves.

Ethical systems, based on the need of salvation of an 'immortal soul,' will necessarily be selfish. That kind of self-centred morality is actually immorality. There are two ideas of morality: to be good and to do good. Only the first one is real morality. The second one may be a means: one can do good in order to become good, but this is rare. People do good actions, which appear entirely altruistic; yet fundamentally they are egoistic, motivated by acquisitiveness, desire for merit, bliss, heaven, reward, or even motivated by fear to avoid punishment, purgatory, hell. All those so-called good actions are inspired by selfishness.

There has been much careless talk about unselfishness being pure gold, and it is high time all right thinking people realised that a life of complete unselfishness, although it may sound very beautiful in theory, can prove as dull as the proverbial ditch-water. Now do not think that we are advocating a completely self-centred life hemmed in with greed, miserliness, avarice and all the other mean traits that are usually associated with selfishness. By selfishness here, we mean that it is very good for your morale, occasionally, to put yourself first, and consider how a thing is going to affect you personally, instead of always making a doormat of yourself and relegating yourself and your affairs to the background.

Done often enough, completely unselfish deeds can squeeze every drop of individuality and independence out of your character. So much so that one fine day you are sure to end up as a colourless, uninteresting personality, without the courage to say "boo" to a goose! All the most interesting things in life, the titbits so to speak, will inevitably pass you by, and the knowledge that you have lived a gloriously selfless life, is going to prove very cold comfort indeed!

In human lives, just as in any other branch of life, it has always been a case of the survival of the fittest and the weakest going to the wall, so if we want to savour for ourselves some of the spice of life we would do better to indulge in a little selfishness now and then! Of course, the type of selfishness and the amount of selfishness you are going to indulge in is very important. Otherwise, you will find that honour, affection and sympathy and other important virtues are going to be jettisoned in favour of selfishness. So, although it is true that every one of us must have a tinge of selfishness in our characters, it is equally important to know where to draw the line.

The modicum of selfishness in all of us is not vice but common-sense. Without it, we would starve, abandon our homes and die of exposure in the fields, give up our places in the bus queues and be late for work—and ultimately become unemployed. It is not a good thing to fly to the opposite extreme, of course. There are snags in over-indulgence too, but every human being can spoil himself if he wants to. It's the golden mean that is so difficult to discover.

Take the case of doctors, for instance, so many of whom have died of overwork before they were fifty. What does it avail them to wear themselves out, with twenty more years of work in them if only they had been selfish enough to consider their own health as well as that of their patients? There is the case of the member of the former Ceylon State Council representing a Southern Province constituency. When he failed to get the Government to attend to the wants of his constituency he spent his own money to provide them. He died suddenly and left his family unprovided for.

Would it not have been better if he had impressed upon his constituents the dignity of looking after their own affairs? That might have been the true selfishness which increased other people's stature, as well as adding cubits to his own. After all, no one is behaving well—however unselfish he may feel—by solving other folks' personal problems, shouldering their responsibilities, sapping their independence. Vessantaras may be splendid characters in *Jataka* stories, but in practical life they are not fit subjects for emulation.

ENVY AND JEALOUSY

It is not the nature of most men to be happy in a prison, and the passions which shut us up in ourselves constitute one of the worst kinds of prisons. Among such passions the commonest are Envy (*usūyā*), and Jealousy (*issā*). In these, our desires are centred upon ourselves: there is no genuine interest in the outer world, but only a concern lest it should in some way injure us or fail to feed our ego.

Envy and jealousy are green-eyed twins. People squander in envy and jealousy enough vital energy to make them perfectly charming and lovable, if it were properly directed. Envy is what inclines us to be more ready to speak evil of the virtuous than of the wicked. A jealous person is one who debases himself in the vain and ignoble effort to discredit others.

Envy is an emotion which has been much decried. If it is so readily stirred in a man that he is almost constantly envious of this, that and the other person, his enviousness is a fault. And yet envy does not deserve all the hard things said about it. Professor William McDougall says that envy is closely allied to, and often blended with, the most generous of the emotions, namely admiration. McDougall thinks that envy is natural and proper to youth. The young person who merely admires generously may be content to remain without the qualities which he admires. But if he also envies the possessor of those qualities, it means that he desires to acquire and possess them for himself, and that he is on the way to cultivate them. Pure envy does not desire to take away from another the envied possession; though it desires similar good things. It is only when envy combines with Malice (*vyāpāda*), with Greed (*lobha*), or Resentment (*paṭigha*), as it readily does, that it is evil.

The envious man needs, then, to exert discrimination, to envy others only for what is really admirable in them, or the possessions that are truly goods. As we grow older we would do well to eradicate envy as far as possible: for, in later life, when we can no longer hope to acquire the qualities or the goods we desire, envy becomes bitter and is the chief enemy of Serenity (*passaddhi*), the most desirable and admirable quality of old age.

HATRED AND RESENTMENT

Our advancement and progress leading to Peace of Mind and consequent happiness in the here and now must, of necessity, link up with other people. We are all of us inter-dependent. What we have to realise with a deep conviction is that it is not so much those actual circumstances, matters, things and people which determine the trend of our personal success as what we permit our thoughts and reactions, shaping our mental attitude, to be toward these.

The law of attraction works universally on every plane of action, and we attract whatever thoughts we permit to dominate over us. A chronic Hatred (*doṣa*), or even a cherished grudge, tears to pieces the one who harbours it. A strong feeling of Resentment (*paṭigha*) is just as likely to cause disease as is a germ. If one is so unfortunate as to have an enemy, the worst thing one can do, not to the enemy but to one-self, is to let resentment dig in and hatred become chronic.

Thoughts are forces ; like builds like, and like attracts like. For a man to govern his thinking, then, is to determine his life. The Buddha's dictum that: " Hatred ceaseth not by hatred at any time; hatred ceaseth by love ; this is an eternal law " (*Dhammapada*), and Christ's injunction: " Do good to those who hate you " are based on a scientific and a natural law. So, to do good is to bring to yourself all the elements in nature of power and good. To do evil is to bring the contrary destructive elements. When our eyes are opened, self-preservation will make us stop all evil thought. Those who live by hate will die by hate: that is, "those who live by the sword will die by the sword." Every evil thought is as a sword drawn on the person by whom it is directed. If a sword is drawn in return, so much the worse for both.

" There is a deep scientific fact underlying the great truth, 'He that takes the sword shall perish by the sword,' " says Ralph Waldo Trine in his *In Tune with the Infinite*. " The moment we come into a realisation of the subtle powers of the thought force we can quickly see that the moment we entertain any thoughts of hatred toward another, he gets the effects of these diabolical forces that go out from us, and has the same thoughts of hatred aroused in him, which in turn return to the sender. Then when we understand the effects of the passion, hatred or anger, even upon the physical body, we can see how detrimental, how expensive this is. The same is true in regard to all kindred thoughts or passions, envy, criticism, jealousy, scorn. In the ultimate, we shall find that in entertaining feelings of this nature toward another, we always suffer far more than the one toward whom we entertain them.

" And then when we fully realize the fact that selfishness is at the root of all error, sin, and crime, and that ignorance is the basis of all selfishness, with what charity we come to look upon the acts of all. It is the ignorant man who seeks his own ends at the expense of the greater whole. It is the ignorant man, therefore, who is the selfish man. The truly wise man is never selfish. He is a seer, and recognises the fact that he, a single member of the one great body, is benefited in just the degree that the entire body is benefited and so he seeks nothing for himself that he would not equally seek for all mankind. " Is not this an echo of the Buddha's teaching?

Sometimes we see hate not only racially directed but also allied with a sense of shame. So North Americans and South Afrikaans hate Negroes, though the latter's ancestors were the victims of the

starvation, fear that what we own today may not be ours to-morrow, fear of sickness, of old age and death ; and sometimes a vague fearfulness, filling life with anxious apprehension. Such wretchedness curses innumerable lives.

Fear crumbles life, it debases the mind, it is a pessimistic out-look and it darkens the future. If a man harbours any sort of fear, it percolates through all his thinking, damages his personality, makes him landlord to a ghost. So great a hold has fear upon us that it has rightly been described as the arch-enemy of man. Fear has become with millions a fixed habit. The thought is everywhere. The thought is thrown upon us from every direction ; to live in continual dread, continuing cringing, continual fear of devils, spooks and gods.

This is the worst form of fear, religious fear. The whole of the Christian system of worship is based on the instinctive fear of the unknown. Fear imprisons the mind ; it is the father of superstition which flourishes in the garden of ignorance. The Church of England litany was written through fear, and is sung or read today by the fearful, who are taught that: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." (Psalm 110). The people think that it is pleasing to God that they should call themselves miserable sinners, and what is said of the litany can be said of most of the other set prayers of the Christian Church. Their origin is fear, and they are repeated or listened to by those who think that their happiness will be increased, here and hereafter, by thus humbling themselves before Almighty God. Prayer comes naturally, and like a tonic it gives strength and encouragement to those who do not realise the unbroken law of cause and effect. For thousands of years men and women have been making supplication to the gods. The people have asked aid from the gods and told the gods all their troubles. With reverent outstretched hands, and closed eyes, they have worshipped those phantoms of their minds.

Fear is the law of religion, because man, in his craving for power which aspires to rule even the supernatural, became subject to superstition. Man is surrounded by mystery, and it is this unexplained nature of things which first gave rise to faith. Bred in ignorance and fashioned in fear, religion established its universal rule in primitive society. The Christian Church, compelled to use the language of social life, gave to ethical terms a purely religious significance. It exploited man's social instincts and feelings in its own interests.

But with social growth the instincts and feelings to which the Church had appealed, and upon the functioning of which in a primitive form it depended, gained an independent strength. The Church had tied itself to a 'sacred' book; it based itself on revelation, and on such a foundation progress is impossible. Theologically, moral terms had one significance; ethically they had another. In Christian theology 'right' and 'wrong' meant agreement with a supernatural revelation. Scientifically they implied certain principles that were in their application modifiable in a series of changing situations.

"When religion ceases to be wisdom, it becomes superstition overlaid with reasoning" (Santayana). Thus religion has become associated with the worst forms of bigotry, narrow-mindedness and even pure selfishness in personal life. That is why we find that selfishness of nature goes so well with some of the most reputedly religious-minded Buddhists and regularly church-going people.

Coincident with his evolution from the animal state was the development of social instincts in man. With these came man's most destructive fear—the fear of poverty, that which the modern sociologists call the fear of want. Fear of poverty is a state of mind, nothing else; but its origin is economic, and it is sufficient to destroy one's chances of achievement in any undertaking. Nothing brings man so much suffering and humility as poverty. Only those who have experienced poverty understand the full meaning of this.

"The Fear of Poverty," says Napoleon Hill in *Think and Grow Rich*, "is, without doubt, the most destructive of the six basic fears—(Poverty, criticism, ill-health, loss of love of someone, old age, death). It has been placed at the head of the list, because it is the most difficult to master. Considerable courage is required to state the truth about the origin of this fear, and still greater courage to accept the truth after it has been stated. The fear of poverty grew out of man's inherited tendency to prey upon his fellowman economically. Nearly all animals lower than man are motivated by instinct, but their capacity to "think" is limited; therefore, they prey upon one another physically. Man, with his superior sense of intuition, with the capacity to think and to reason, does not eat his fellow man bodily; he gets more satisfaction out of "eating" him financially. Man is so avaricious that every conceivable law has been passed to safeguard him from his fellow-man."

These sociological roots of religion, feeding on the uncertainties of life, and the fears which continue to be generated in a competitive, exploiting society, will only wither away with the extermination of the capitalist social order and the establishment of Socialism. Lenin, in his characteristic, straightforward manner, emphasizes the importance of laying bare the social roots of religion. In his essay on *Politics, Agitation and the Class Point of View*, he says: "When society is composed in such a manner that an insignificant minority has wealth and power at its disposal, as the masses continually suffer want and bear the burdens, then it is quite natural that the exploiters sympathize with a religion which teaches the exploited to suffer the human hell without grumbling for the sake of a possible heavenly paradise." The Marxian Communist theory thus emphasises that the root of religion is fear. And in this connexion we might remember the words of Professor Radhakrishnan who wrote: "So long as religions themselves are the expressions of fear, the security and protection they afford us today only succeed in distorting human life."

To get our fear out into the open, and frankly face it is of primary importance. As infants, we started with fear of two things only—falling and a loud noise. All other fears have been accumulated since. To find out where and how we picked them up, to trace their development until they become as though they were another's and not our own, is half the battle won.

Fear has walked at man's heels through many ages—fear of wild beasts and wilder nature, fear of the inexplicable gods of thunder and lightning, fear of his neighbour man.

He saw his roof-tree burned with fire from heaven—and did not know why. He saw his children die of plague—and did not know why. He saw them starve, he saw them made slaves. It happened—he did not know why. Those things had always happened.

Then he set himself to find out—first one thing, then another. Slowly, through centuries, he fought his battle with fear. And wise men and teachers arose to help him in the battle.

His children and he did not have to die of plague. His children and he did not have to make human sacrifices to appease the wrath of inexplicable gods. His children and he did not have to kill the stranger just because he was a stranger. His children and he did not have to be slaves. And the shape of fear grew less.

No one man did this by himself. It took many men and women, over many years. It took sages and saints and martyrs and the common people. It started with the first fire in the first cave—the

fire that scared away the beasts of the night. It will not end with the atom bomb or the conquest of far planets.

As intelligence develops it enables us to appreciate that we live in an ordered universe. Then fear departs. As we understand Nature better, we fear it less. By intelligence we can guard ourselves against its terrors, and thus rise superior to our surroundings. The savage, on the other hand, surrounded without by wild beasts stronger than himself, by rain and hail, thunder and lightning, earthquake and volcano, and within by disease, pain and sickness, prostrates himself in very terror to the ground, pleading protection from some unknown power. Herein lies the difference between the savage and the beast. From this consciousness of a power outside of himself, which he thought he could placate by flattery or by prayer, just as he himself could be placated, the savage developed the faculty of worship, and the forces of Nature became his gods. Good forces were good gods and evil forces evil gods.

In that long night of savagery, in that constant fight against the forces of Nature, the seeds of superstition were sown in the human mind, and this superstition is still part of our inheritance from the past. But it is possible to master this enemy of Serenity (*passaddhi*). Fear comes to those who are not able to comprehend the laws of Nature.

"Wheresoever fear arises, it arises in the fool, not in the wise man," says the Buddha in the *Anguttara Nikaya*. Fears are nothing more than states of mind. One's state of mind is subject to control and direction; the negative use of thought produces our fears; the positive use realizes our hopes and ideals, and in either case the choice rests entirely with ourselves. Every human being has the ability completely to control his own mind. Nature has endowed man with absolute control over but one thing, and that is thought. This fact, coupled with the additional fact that everything which man creates begins in the form of a thought, leads one very near to the principle by which fear may be mastered.

A noted British anatomist was once asked by a student what was the best cure for fear, and he answered, "Try doing something for someone."

The student was considerably astonished by the reply, and requested further enlightenment; whereupon his instructor said, "You can't have two opposing sets of thoughts in your mind at one and the same time. One set of thoughts will always drive the other out. If, for instance, your mind is completely occupied with

an unselfish desire to help someone else, you can't be harbouring fear at the same time."

THE FEAR OF DEATH

It is not often that we are brave enough to come face to face with the thought of our own mortality. Yet man is not free in life, unless he is also free from the fear of death.

As far as our own deaths are concerned, we should remember what science teaches about the process of dying. We needlessly frighten ourselves with anticipated horrors which never come to pass. As the famous physician, Sir William Osler, puts it, "In my wide clinical experience, most human beings die really without pain or fear. There is as much oblivion about the last hours as about the first."

A veteran nurse once said: "It has always seemed to me a major tragedy that so many people go through life haunted by the fear of death—only to find when it comes that it's as natural as life itself. For very few are afraid to die when they get to the very end. In all my experience only one seemed to feel any terror—a woman who had done her sister a wrong which it was too late to right.

"Something strange and beautiful happens to men and women when they come to the end of the road. All fear, all horror disappears. I have often watched a look of happy wonder dawn in their eyes when they realized this was true. It is all part of the goodness of Nature."

No, *Māra* (Death) is not the enemy of life but its friend, for it is the knowledge that our years are limited which makes them so precious. Plato was right when he declared that infinite life on this earth would not be desirable, for a never ending existence would be without heights or depths, without challenge or achievement.

(5) *Renunciation not Escapism*

ANALYSE the prayers of mankind of all creeds, in every age—and their petitions come down to the common denominations of daily bread and inward peace. Such pleas for spiritual serenity must not be identified with escapism and retreat from the hurly-burly of life. Rather, they seek an inner equilibrium which enables us to overcome life's buffetings.

An ascetic self-discipline involving a withdrawal, partial or complete, from the common life of the community is not the path

to the conquest of Attachment (*upādāna*). Nor does it necessarily bring about a transformation of one's life. Merely by ceasing to work, one cannot attain the true quiescence of Self-realization (*nekkhamma*). Inactivity, as such, is not perfection ; nor is the former a way to the latter. The right process of renunciation is not in running away from life, but in facing it.

Whatever may parade under the garb of Buddhism, either in the East or in the West, it would be pertinent to ask ourselves whether the Buddha at any time advocated a life of inaction and quietude, and whether He insisted on the complete withdrawal of the individual from the conflicts and confusions of the world into a safe and solitary retreat. We should also ask ourselves whether the Buddha Himself led a life of inaction and solitude, unmindful of the weal and woes of humanity.

Even before the Buddha's time there were those who, following the ascetic ideal, withdrew themselves from the world altogether and worked for the salvation of their own souls. They were more concerned with saving their precious little souls than with the sufferings of humanity. The Buddha Himself followed this blind alley for six long years, and gave it up when He realised the futility of being pre-occupied with the liberation of a non-existing soul. In His very first discourse itself He roundly condemned this ascetic ideal as being painful, ignoble and leading to no good. To use the Venerable Dean Inge's expression, after years of austerity, the Buddha "returned to the world" and lived in it dedicating His whole life to the service and well-being of humanity.

Far from preaching quietism, the Buddha's discourses, parables, and aphorisms abound in exhortations to indefatigable and energetic activity. We read in the *Dhammapada*: "He who does not rouse himself when it is time to rise, who though young and strong is full of sloth, whose will and thought are weak, that lazy and idle man will never find the way to knowledge (enlightenment). When General Sinha asked Him if He taught the doctrine of inaction, the Buddha replied: "How might one rightly say of Me that the Tathagatha holds the principle of inaction? I proclaim the non-doing of evil by body, speech, and thought. I proclaim the non-doing of various kinds of wicked and evil actions..... But I proclaim the doing of good by body, speech and thought, I proclaim the doing of various kinds of good action."

The Buddha was a supreme realist. He, more than any other great teacher, realised the futility of running away from the cosmic process, for He knew that by far the greater and the more important

part of the cosmic process was within the individual, and in running away from it, he would only run away with it. He neither sought to aggravate the conflict by preparing the individual to stand in battle array against the cosmic process. On the contrary He taught His followers to understand the true nature of the cosmic process or, in other words, its actuality, face its conflicts boldly and squarely and solve them by resolving the root causes of these conflicts: Greed, hatred and delusion. The Buddha's was the way of transcending the cosmic process.

For example, witness the story of Kisa Gotami. Her little son died when he was able to run about, and, grief-stricken, she took the corpse in her arms and ran hither and thither, asking people for some medicine that might bring her son back to life. Someone directed her to the Buddha. He saw her great distress, and said: "Sister, you have done well to come here for medicine. Go into the city and bring me a few mustard seeds from a house where there has been no death." She was cheered and went, but when she had gone round a number of houses, she realised that the Buddha in His great compassion had sent her to learn the truth. She then went to the cemetery, laid her child there, and, taking him by the hand, said: "Little son, I thought that death happened to you alone, but I see, alas! that it is the common lot of all people." There she left him and returned to the Buddha, who asked her if she had got the mustard seeds. "That work is done, Lord," answered Kisa Gotami.

Not many days had passed since His "return to the world." He had gathered sixty-one disciples by that time. He sent them in different directions, far and wide, exhorting them: "Go ye forth, O Brethren, for the good of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the happiness of the many, for the good, benefit and happiness of gods and men. Let not two go by one way. Preach, O Brethren, the Dhamma, excellent in the beginning, excellent in the middle and excellent in the end, both in the spirit, and the letter. Proclaim the righteous life, altogether perfect and pure." The active altruistic nature of Buddhism is here emphasized.

That Buddhism was not a mere system of self-culture is evident. The love of our fellow-men and the duty of labouring for their welfare are prominent features of the Buddha's teaching, in strong contrast with the isolation and quietism of asceticism. In promulgating the *anatta* doctrine, which emphasizes that the individual has no permanent Ego or radical individuality, the Buddha by no means advocated a negative or passive attitude towards the

duties of this world. With the self-importance of the individual there disappear the exaggerated values and turmoil of life, but not the duties of life.

If the Buddha did not expect His followers to lead an inactive, quietest mode of life, He Himself set an example to them, by leading an active and energetic life. For forty-five long years He wandered far and wide, preaching the doctrine of the Middle Way, calling people on to the path of righteousness and sowing the seeds of the world's first great reformist movement.

The spirit behind the Buddha's advocacy of a life of renunciation can best be understood from the following. One day He was asked by a layman: "Must I give up my wealth, my home and my business enterprise and, like You, go into homelessness in order to attain the bliss of the religious life?" And the Buddha replied: "The bliss of the religious life is attainable by everyone who walks in the Noble Eightfold Path. He that cleaves to wealth had better cast it away than allow his heart to be poisoned by it; but he who does not cleave to wealth, and possessing riches uses them rightly, will be a blessing unto his fellow-beings.

"I say unto thee, remain in thy station of life and apply thyself with diligence to thy enterprises. It is not life and wealth and power that enslave men, but the cleaving to life and wealth and power. The Dhamma of the Tathagatha does not require a man to go into homelessness or to resign the world unless he feels called upon to do so; but the Dhamma of the Tathagatha requires every man to free himself from the illusion of self, to cleanse his heart, to give up his thirst for pleasure, and lead a life of righteousness.

"And whatever men do, whether they remain in the world as artisans, merchants, and officers of any kind, or retire from the world and devote themselves to a life of religious meditation, let them put their whole heart into the task; let them be diligent and energetic, and if they are like the lotus, which, although it grows in the water, yet remains untouched by the water, if they struggle in life without cherishing envy or hatred, if they live in the world not a life of self but a life of truth, then surely joy, peace and bliss will dwell in their minds." It should be clear from this passage that, by renunciation, the Buddha did not mean deserting the world.

An extreme distaste for this sinful world may lead to such a feeling of revulsion that the individual rejects every aspect of this worldly life and longs only for the death that will release him from his fleshly bonds and transport him to a wholly spiritual sphere.

This form of escapism seems to be even less creditable than a materialistic nihilism ; only a perverse masochism can conceive life as a vale of tears, as a mortification to be endured for the sake of another kind of existence. To such quietists one can only answer in the words of Spinoza: "The free man thinks of anything rather than of death: his wisdom is a meditation, not on death, but on life."

The Buddha's prescription for the good life is not cessation of activity, desiring little and doing nothing. The Buddha preaches not quietism but activity : One of the Buddhist maxims reads—"If anything is to be done, let a man *do* it ; let him attack it vigorously." In the *Dhammapada* we are told that an active life and the resolve to win the saving truth, the efforts needful for its attainment, the lives spent in the practice of virtue, are not opposed ; it says :

Activity is the immortal path, !
 Quietism the path of death ;
 The active do not die ;
 'Tis the quietist who is like unto the dead.

Those who know this distinctly,
 The wise in activity,
 Rejoice in activity,
 Delighting in the lot of the elect.

Unto the quietist are yoked the fools,
 The fellows who have no wisdom ;
 But the wise man guardeth activity
 As the greatest treasure.

Let none to quietism be yoked,
 The love's delight and intimacy,
 For the active, virtuous man
 Obtains an ample joy.

When the sagacious one putteth away
 Quietism by activity,
 He, the wise, climbing the terraced heights of wisdom,
 Looks down upon the sorrowing crowd,
 As one that stands on a mountain
 Looks down upon the groundlings.

These verses and others with similar import in the Pitakas stress the need for action and prescribe action as the means to get

deliverance. The Buddha preaches not renunciation of action, but renunciation in action. There is a certain quantum of creative energy left in every human being which is not absorbed by the life of a workaday world. This is the essential godliness in man. No one can be happy who does not find some channel for this creative energy.

Life without striving is a tame affair. Unless there be a steep and arduous hill there is no spur for man's progressive will. To drink of joy one must have tasted care. The fruit that falls and lies beneath our feet, waiting for us to stoop, is never half as sweet as that for which we strive with might and main. Watch how the flowers are battered down by rain; one hour of sun and they are strong again. Shall we, because of storms, admit defeat?

Our veneration for the Master insists almost in overlooking one essential quality of the Buddha which should be the most attractive: His manhood. Our people like to hear all the miraculous happenings in His last and in His previous lifetimes. But they almost forget that He was man like we, that He had to fight for the final victory, a struggle which we cannot imagine. Just because He was a man with human capacities and limitations, He can serve us as an example we can look up to and follow. He was not born a Buddha, but He made himself so.

H. Fielding Hall, in his book *The Soul of a People*, has a beautiful passage: "This man was no inspired Teacher. He had no one to show him the way he should go; he was tried with failure, with failure after failure. He learnt as other men learn, through suffering and mistake. . . He is no model of perfection whom it is hopeless for us to imitate, but a man like ourselves, who fought, who failed and fought, who failed and fought again, and won!"

Failures are but the pillars to success. To learn by our failures is to achieve success. To never have failed is never to win. Unless we experience failure and its attending forces, we are not able to appreciate to the full a victory. It becomes merely a turn in events that is of little or no interest to us. Failures not only help us to succeed, but make us kind, sympathetic, understanding and rich in experience.

If we want to live happily, we must live adventurously. Not because any external imperative, religious or secular, commands us to do so; but because the necessity is inherent in the nature of life itself throughout the universe. Not to do so is to die.

Therefore, if we find on self-examination that any of the timidities and hesitations that restrain our behaviour and keep us self-pre-occupied have their origin in our religious or moral convictions, it is high time we gave those convictions a very thorough overhaul. They are wrong because they have the wrong result. They are evil because their effect is evil upon our spiritual vitalities. However well authenticated they may seem to be by tradition, by social sanction, or by the written word, we can deny their truth and discard them. They are known by their fruits, and those fruits are big with the seeds of death.

We can afford to be quite ruthless about this. The same fear that implants false religious ideas in our minds tends to deter us from subjecting them to criticism. They are dressed up in the trappings of supernatural or "sacred" book authority. It seems sacrilegious to doubt them, let alone discard them altogether.

The task must nevertheless be undertaken. Our false fears, secular and religious alike, are the effects upon our personalities of an attitude to life that is essentially childish because it is self-seeking. They are the price we pay for wanting always to be safe. We must live dangerously if we are to live at all.

It is better to have adventured in life, and made mistakes, than to be petrified in mind and body, with a horizon bounded by quietism and the four walls of your home or temple. Only the dead know complete security. Men need the inspiration of a new vision which will come, and can come, only through the dauntless, prophetic living of adventurous spirits who will dare to overthrow the old temples in order to build new and greater ones upon their ruins.

(6) *Nirvana Means Mental Tranquillity*

IF one is asked to draw up a catalogue of the acknowledged "goods" of life; the inventory of earthly cravings, the pleasures of the material world (*kāma-tanha*) will invariably consist of: love, power, riches and fame. This, no doubt, is an excellent list and set down in not unreasonable order. But it is lacking in one important ingredient without which all earthly desirables become an intolerable burden. And that is: Mental Tranquillity (*Samatha*).

This is the gift which "even the gods envy." Sensual pleasures are not hard to obtain. Wealth is commonplace, power and

fame not rare: But Peace of Mind is not easily acquired. Says the *Dhammapada*:

" One whose Mental faculties have attained Tranquillity,
Like a horse well-trained by the charioteer ;
Who has thrown off pride and is without taints,
Such a one even the gods envy."

In the *Samyutta Nikaya* the Buddha says: " Now, what, O Brethren, is Nirvana ? It is Mental Tranquillity (*Samatha*) resulting from the extinction of greed, hatred and delusion. And what is the way leading to it ? It is through Insight (*vipassanā*). " Mental Tranquillity is the true goal of the considered life. The sum of all other possessions does not necessarily add up to Peace of Mind ; on the other hand, inner tranquillity can flourish without the material supports of property or even the buttress of physical health. Mental Tranquillity can transform a thatched hut into a spacious mansion; the want of it can make a regal residence an imprisoning shell.

Mental Tranquillity cannot be won by any brief or superficial effort. Association with noble works—literary, musical, artistic—helps to promote inward peace, but these alone cannot wholly end the conflict within us. Certainly we shall not find peace in the furious pursuit of wealth which slips like quicksilver through our grasping fingers. And finally, not even in the sublime sharings of human love—that emotion which most powerfully conveys the illusion of perfect happiness—is peace of mind reliably to be found.

Where then shall we look for it ? *Within you !* said the Buddha. Here, in two words, is the key to the problem.

The notion that Mental Tranquillity may be unattainable is too much to accept. There must be peace of mind somewhere. If not in this life and this world, then in another. Long before the Christian revelation, men invented heavens to satisfy their craving for happiness. Or they gave up looking for it in the disappointing outer world and looked for it within themselves.

This last was a stroke of genius, of the greatest genius the world has known. What makes you unhappy ? Unsatisfied desires. You crave for this or that, a great or a small pleasure, and you have missed it. So, then, if you give up your craving you will cease to be unhappy. " One thing only do I teach," said the Buddha, " the cause of suffering and the way of escape from suffering. All the world over, the sea has one taste, and so is it that My doctrine must everywhere deal with unhappiness and its cure. The man who is not at peace is also not wise. I will lead you from the

unreal to the real, from darkness to light, from death to the undying. All things are impermanent. We should, therefore, cling to nothing. To exist is to crave for satisfaction. To crave is to suffer. The cause of craving is personal desire. The cure lies not in appealing to the gods, if there be any, but within ourselves."

What the trouble is, was clearly stated, 300 years ago, by that great religious writer, Jeremy Taylor. "All our trouble," he wrote, "is from within us; and if a dish of lettuce and a clear fountain can cool all my heats, so that I shall have neither thirst nor pride, lust nor revenge, envy nor ambition, I am lodged in the bosom of felicity and indeed no men sleep so soundly as they that lay their heads upon Nature's lap. He, therefore, that hath the fewest desires and the most quiet passions, whose wants are soon provided for and whose possessions cannot be disturbed with violent fears, he that dwells next door to satisfaction and can carry his needs and lay them down where he please, this man is the happy man, and this is not to be done in great designs and swelling fortunes."

The seeking of pleasure must not be confused with the seeking of happiness. Pleasure is elusive, temporary, and can leave a bitter taste; also, it can be costly, yet unsatisfactory. Not so happiness, which does not have to be purchased; it comes from an inner source—the Mind.

There was never a time when so much official effort was being expended to produce happiness, and probably never a time when so little attention was paid by the individual to creating the personal qualities that make for it. What one misses most today is the evidence of widespread personal determination to develop a character that will in itself, given any reasonable odds, make for happiness. Our whole emphasis is on the reform of living conditions, of increased wages, of controls on the economic structure—the government approach—and so little on man improving himself.

The ingredients of happiness are so simple that they can be counted on the fingers of one hand. Happiness comes from within, and rests most securely on simple goodness and clear conscience. Belief in a Supreme Being, worship of gods and saints and offering of flowers and food to images, acts which the multitude call religion, may not be essential to it, but no one is known to have gained it without a philosophy resting on ethical principles. Selfishness is its enemy; to make another happy is to be happy one's self. It is quiet, seldom found for long in crowds, most easily won in moments of solitude and reflection. It cannot be bought; indeed money has very little to do with it.

No one is happy unless he is reasonably well satisfied with himself, so that the quest for Mental Tranquillity must of necessity begin with self-examination. We shall not often be content with what we discover in this scrutiny. There is so much to do, and so little done. Upon this searching self-analysis, however, depends the discovery of those qualities that make each man unique, and whose development alone can bring satisfaction.

Incessantly and ever in new forms, we find the admonition, repeated by the Buddha, not to take the show of moral action for the reality, not to remain clinging to the external, when salvation can come alone from within. It is all very well to guard the eye and ear from evil, but mere not-seeing and not-hearing avail nothing; else were the blind and deaf the most perfect (*Indriya-bhâvanâ Sutta*). The purpose, with which we speak and act, is decisive of the value of word and action; the word is worthless, where acts are wanting; our whole existence depends on our thought; thought is its noblest factor; in thought its state consists: "He who recites much My word, but does not act up to them, the fool is like a herd who counts the cows of others; he has no share in the righteous life. He who recites little My word, but acts in accordance thereunto, renouncing lust, hate, and stupidity, truly knowing, with heart totally free, clinging for naught here or hereafter, he shares in the righteous life." (*Dhammapada*).

Every person who wishes to attain peace of mind must learn the art of renouncing many things in order to possess other things more fully. As young children, our wishes were sovereign; we had only to wail, and the adult world hastened to fulfil our every desire. We knew, at that stage of development, very little about the postponement of satisfaction or the necessity of renunciation. But, as we grow older, we learn that every stage of human development calls upon us to weigh differing goods and to sacrifice some for the sake of others.

The philosopher, Santayana, pointed out that the great difficulty in life does not so much arise in the choice between good and evil as in the choice between good and good. In early life, however, we do not realize that one desire can be quite inconsistent with another. The young boy may vacillate between a dozen different plans for the future, but the mature man will have to renounce many careers in order to fulfil one. The same truth exists in the realm of emotions. It is fitting for the adolescent to transfer his love-interest from one object of affection to another, but it is tragic when the grown man still plays the role of the adolescent. The man

Man is a moral being. His reason, properly used, can still tell him what *ought* to be, even if his concrete behaviour falls short of the ideal. Sex, like any other tendency in man, must be regulated by reason. Man, not being governed by the detailed instincts of lesser animals, would find his tendencies running wild were he not to regulate them by reason.

No one can repeal the moral law. The hope of civilization lies in our obedience to it, rather than surrender to animal instincts. Chastity, fidelity, decency, all the old virtues are a part of the distilled wisdom of the ages; a beautiful necessity for a more glorious race. Growth comes only in self-mastery.

The modern attitude towards sex is becoming as unbalanced as that of our forefathers. They erected a veil of secrecy and hypocrisy around the subject; we have torn down the veil, but are in danger of making a "fetish" of the subject through the over-emphasis on the part that sex plays in life. The Press, the Screen and the Arts generally, are all guilty, to some extent, of the over-emphasis of sex.

What is the really sane attitude to sex? We must not return to the mediaeval standard of regarding sex synonymous with sin; neither must the modern attitude prevail of regarding everything in terms of sex and using the instinct as a yard stick to measure our pleasures and happiness. As usual, the sane course lies midway between two extremes. It means above all the clear recognition of sex as a powerful influence on our lives, but a power that is under our own control. It postulates the necessity of being guided by the formula "that the instincts should be so controlled that they contribute to the welfare of the whole."

DESIRE NOT IN ITSELF EVIL

Desire for wealth is a valuable adjunct to success if held within proper bounds. Unrestrained, it leads to restless blighting discontent, envy, greed, fear and cruelty to fellow-beings. The accumulation of money may aid in the achievement of happiness, but does not of itself bring satisfaction. It facilitates the quest of happiness. It supplies favourable conditions. It is clearly easier to be happy, if there be no haunting concern as to what the morrow may bring forth.

But where most men of vast means fail is that they confuse the means with the end. They do not understand the nature, meaning and proper function of wealth. They look upon money as an end, and find it, alas! but a blind alley leading to no wide open gate of

happiness. Most rich men are unhappy, restless, disconsolate. They have mistakenly supposed that the mere accumulation of money would reward them with the prizes of life. The veriest beggar is often more happy. Money is an article which may be used as a universal passport everywhere except to Mental Tranquillity and as a universal provider of everything except happiness. "One is the road that leads to wealth, another the road that leads to Nirvana." (*Dhammapada*).

The Buddha said that the road to happiness is in freedom from desire: "Those who are free from worldly desires attain Nirvana." (*Dhammapada*). His disciples, and the subsequent interpreters and commentators of His teaching, carried the doctrine to extremes, and His philosophy became a negative and retarding factor. In so far as we permit our desires to dominate, to rob us of our peace of mind and blight our happiness, those expounders were right. No man can be happy who is the slave of desire. But when he masters the tyranny of desire, and transforms desire into well-ordered and fully controlled ambition, he is on the road to happiness. The Buddha does not recommend the rooting out of all desires, but only the rooting out of the desire for the fruit of action and the desire for selfish gain.

Desire, of itself, is not evil. The correct type of desire is exceedingly salutary. In the *Majjhima Nikaya* instances are given of the correct type of desire to be cultivated; the desire for emancipation from sensuality; aspirations towards the attainment of love towards others; the wish not to injure other living things; the desire for the eradication of wrong; and the promotion of right dispositions in one's own heart and so on. Buddhism, therefore, does not, as is commonly misconceived, postulate the suppression of all desires. The desires that it asks man to suppress are Selfish Desires or *tanha*.

Tanha refers only to purely personal and selfish desires which throw us out of harmony with the universal law. When we have learnt to make our desires accord with the universal law, our personalities will cease to be separate, egotistical discords in the scheme of things, but will fit in with the whole in one sublime and universal harmony.

No man has scaled the summits, except he who has been urged on by some mighty imperative in the form of desire. The ambition or desire for racial betterment, national advancement, service, discovery, adventure—these have been the impelling motives in all progress, individual and racial.

Likewise have negative and uncontrolled desires ever led men and nations to their doom. The same force which raises us to lofty summits drags us to destruction if not controlled and directed. Unrestricted ambition led Napoleon to St. Helena, Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany to exile in Holland, Mussolini to face an execution squad and Hitler to an unknown grave. It is an imperceptible line that divides ambition and Avarice (*macchera*). In a great man, avarice is euphemistically called ambition; in an average man, ambition is called avarice. Ambition is legitimate within limits. When ambition over-reaches itself, it is fatal.

That fame and ruin lie side by side is a bitter truth soon learned by those who have achieved fame through good or evil means. The public and press are a fickle mistress, and the "darling" taken to her heart today may be thrust into darkest obscurity tomorrow.

A yearning for achievement is an admirable attribute of human nature. Where, then, do we go wrong? We err in the excessive energy that we devote, not to real accomplishment, but to that awful tyranny of "trying to do better than our neighbour." A man may have a home, possessions, a charming family and yet find all these things as ashes to his taste because he has been outstripped by some other runners in the race for material things. It is not that he does not possess enough for his own wants, but that others possess more. It is the *more* that haunts him and makes him minimize his real achievements.

The time has come to say: "I am no longer going to be interested in how much power or wealth another man possesses so long as I can attain sufficient for the dignity and security of my family and myself. I am going to set my goal for myself rather than borrow them from others. I refuse any longer to destroy my peace of mind by striving to outdo others; I will also judge myself in the scale of goodness and culture."

NON-ATTACHMENT: THE MARK OF THE IDEAL MAN

What religion could man worship to fill the aching heart that all the glory of good material things of life had left empty? We come into being, struggle with the outer world, cling to its goods. The oft-mentioned dialogue between the Buddha and Ananda sets it clearly forth to the proposition, *tanha paccaya dukkha*, "from greed comes sorrow"; it appends a picture of human toil and struggles

for pleasure and gain ; and in it are met the words seek, obtain, possession, guard, envy, quarrel, strife, pride, back-biting, lying, revenge, fear.

What is the Buddha's solution to this entanglement ? How did He propose to untie the knot to find a way of escape ?

The solution was summed up in that memorable discourse to His first converts: "There is a Middle Way, O Brethren, avoiding the two extremes, discovered by the Tathāgatha—a Path which opens the eyes and bestows understanding, which leads to Peace of Mind, to the higher wisdom, to enlightenment, to Nirvana."

"And which is that Middle Way ? Verily it is the Noble Eight-fold path."

The Eightfold Path leads to Arahatsip, the Buddhist ideal of life ; and the ideal man of Buddhism is the non-attached man, the Arahāt, the perfected man who has attained the blessedness of Nirvana.

Nirvana, which is, in Buddhism, the *summum bonum* of life in this world, is Mental Tranquillity with the concomitant states: "Where there is no more craving nor grasping ; where there is no more attachment to external things ; where the conscious mind with all its discriminations, attachments, aversions and egoism is forever put away ; where logical measures, as they are seen to be inert, are no longer seized upon ; where even the notion of truth is treated with indifference because of its causing bewilderment." With the release from all these there is the calm state, "where there is no more attachment for life, no more sex-lust, no more thirst for learning, no more craving for eternal life ; with the disappearance of these fourfold attachments, there is no more arising of sensory-elements ; with no more arising of sensory-elements the defilements on the face of the Tranquil Mind clear away, and the Bodhisattva (ideal man) attains self-realisation of Noble Wisdom that is the heart's assurance of Nirvana." (*Lankavatara Sutta*).

Aldous Huxley in his latest work uses the word 'non-attached' to describe the ideal man, the mature personality. He points out that there is a singular unanimity of opinion among men of insight, no matter to what age or culture they have belonged, as to the qualities of character that the ideal man will possess. The ideal man, says Huxley, is 'non-attached' : "Non-attached to his bodily sensations and lusts. Non-attached to his craving for power and possessions. Non-attached to the objects of these various desires. Non-attached to his anger and hatred ; non-attached to his exclusive

loves. Non-attached to wealth, fame, social position. Non-attached even to science, art, speculation and philanthropy."

This may be considered as an accurate modern restatement of the attributes of an Arahant, the ideal, or the perfect man, enunciated 2500 years ago. Huxley goes on to point out that non-attachment is negative only in name, for to live the unattached life is to practise all the virtues, to cast out fear, to respect intelligence and put an end to pain in oneself and others. It is to be happy and blessed as well as good.

Here is a Western echo of an Eastern conclusion. The life of personal relationships, with all the strength of its integrity, adventurousness and unconcern for expediencies, is not a remote ideal, but the natural expression of human nature developing in freedom to its own fulfilment. It is not an exalted state of being, to which only a few rare ones can ever attain, but the native air of the grown man who interprets aright the meaning of his own experience.

The non-attachment of the ideal man to the material and temporal is a result of an attachment, amounting to self-identification, with the real and meaningful in his living environment. It is not the consequence of a discipline of self-abnegation, but of a power to live 'more abundantly' because all the powers of human nature have been made free to grow into discernment. The ability to interpret the meaning of experience aright comes, not by forsaking the world, but by entering into it to know it fully as it is. "If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light." The light is always there. It is the dim vision that distorts the appearance of things.

In that transcendent life, man is able to lift himself, and does lift himself, out of the cloud of worldly existence and enter into the stream of being, where there is neither past, present, nor future, but all being; a state which is entirely independent of, and outside, the finite and the static universe, of which Einstein has now given us the mathematical proofs. Man is then no more subject to rebirth. At the instant of death, he who has reached perfection or Nirvana, vanishes from creation and attains Parinirvana, or final freedom from the effects of space and time. All that Parinirvana means is liberation from the effects of space and time; death is purely a matter of the physical body coming to a halt in the space-time universe; but Karma, the summation of our mental and bodily actions, continues until at last it finds release from the limitations of time and space.

When John Greenleaf Whittier wrote: "And step by step, since time began, I see the steady gain of man," he believed, with most of his 19th century fellow optimists, that mankind was slowly but surely working its way through history to a better world. Science, state-craft and scripture, they thought, were leading men together to the same goal—the establishment of God's kingdom upon earth. Today, midway in a bloodier, more dangerous century, there is widespread scepticism about the "steady gain of man."

But what kind of progress, if any, can man hope for? The classical Oriental and Greek idea of progress of man was that there was no such thing. Like the endless cycles of Nature, the lives of men and enterprises of nations were thought to flourish and die again and again in an endless circle of recurrences. Man's only hope, the Buddha taught, was to free himself from imprisonment in the closed circle of recurring births and deaths, which is the inexorable destiny of all conscious beings.

The passage in Nietzsche's *Joyful Wisdom* is well known, but it is worthy of repetition. "This life, as thou livest it now, as thou hast lived it, thou needst must live it again, and an infinite number of times; and there will be in it nothing new; but every grief and every joy, every thought and every sigh, all the infinitely great and the infinitely little in thy life must return for thee, and all this in the same sequence and the same order. And also this spider and the moonlight through the trees, and also this moment and myself. The eternal hour-glass of existence will ever be turned again, and thou with it, dust of dust."

There is a path from the world of the created out into the endless, the Eternal or the Deathless. In the *Dhammapada* the Buddha says:

Cut off the stream by striving ;
Drive out, O Brethren, sense-attachments.
When thou hast known liberation from being compounded,
Then art thou wise in the Uncreate.

The created derives its being and life solely from the Uncreated. The created can free himself from being created. Time after time the words uttered by the Buddha, on His deathbed, recur in the sacred texts: "Impermanent truly are all composite things, liable to origination and decease; as they arose so they pass away; liberation from being compounded is happiness."

The urge for liberation from being created or compounded (*sankhara*) in order to find release from the limitations of time

and space and thereby bring the process of rebirth to a cessation, can be understood only in psychological terms. The mind with its incrustated layers of sense-attachments, which Buddhism teaches as the hindrances to our attainment of the ultimate goal, is no more than the sepulchre of primordial life-urges that psychology has shown us; the impersonal, collective nature of these primordial forces is apparently the same as that of the "collective unconscious" of Jung. The urge for release and liberation is what Freud has negatively called the "death-instinct," the opposite of the "life-instinct." Freud says that in the subconscious, "instinctive impulses...exist independently side by side, and are exempt from mental contradiction....There is in this system no negation, no dubiety, no varying degrees of certainty....Its processes are timeless, they are not ordered temporarily, are not altered by the passage of time, in fact bear no relation to time at all." It is these forces, as well as the body that must be brought under control by self-culture and self-control.

(7) With Love Towards All and Malice Towards None

MAN is the great problem of today. Civilization is not threatened by atom bombs; it is threatened by ourselves, it is we who are a danger to ourselves. "The proper study of mankind is man," said Pope in the eighteenth century. But that wise advice has been neglected. By the nineteenth century men had come to think that scientists had only to achieve the control of Nature and humanity's difficulties would be at an end.

An era of progress and prosperity would unfold so automatically that man could scarcely avoid growing better and better, richer and richer, happier and happier. Yet now, when the material conquest of Nature is at the highest peak in history, the world is aflame with conflict, and the physical scientists themselves, the very men who have put the new weapons into our hands, now admit that Man, not Nature, is our problem, and warn us that unless we can control ourselves, our control of Nature will merely bring about our own destruction.

We can never stop behaving like inhuman beings until we understand why we are doing so. We were jungle animals for far longer than we have been civilized ones, and the jungle impulses are still dormant in each one of us; so that while we imagine ourselves to be human, we are still capable of behaving like beasts,

and do so frequently, whenever we indulge in aggressiveness, either in its obvious form of violence or in its subtler variants such as possessiveness or manoeuvres aimed at the achievement of domination.

We have yet to realize that most adult troubles are rooted in childhood: it is in the family that the child learns to adapt itself to civilization; it is in the home that a happy adaptation is made possible—or impossible. Lack of love, lack of right feeling, lack of security, repressive restraints, frustrated gifts and emotions, ignorance: these are some of the mainsprings of later aggressiveness. Add to this the fact that modern society is highly competitive, so great is the competitive spirit, in fact, that the desperate adolescent may revert to jungle methods, and we have then the raw materials of disaster.

All the factors which make us behave like inhuman beings are augmented by the great paradox of the twentieth century. We have made fabulous progress in technology, without comparable progress in our ability to handle human relationships.

If any subject occupies the public mind today it is education. But what kind of education have we in view? To educate the mind is difficult enough, but how much more troublesome the education of the emotions? Accuracy of thinking is not, as is commonly supposed, a rarer thing than refinement or delicacy of sensibility. Far more care is given by the State to the education of the intellect than of the feelings. The value of quick wits, a good memory, sharp intelligence, and exact thinking is universally recognized. But where are we to look for a similar recognition of the value of right feeling, of delicate discernment, of sensitivity and sympathy in social intercourse?

A call to master the 'science of human relationships,' as possibly the only defence against the atom bomb, was made recently by President Truman. He was speaking at the Fordham University centenary ceremonies, during which he was granted the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws.

"Civilization cannot survive an atomic war. Nothing would be left but a world reduced to rubble," said the President. "There is a profound truth in the opening words of the Charter of the United Nations; Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation. The Charter declares: 'Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defence of peace must be constructed.' So we must look to wipe out ignorance, which threatens catastrophe.

Ignorance and its hand-maidens—prejudice, intolerance, suspicion of our fellow men—breed dictators and they breed wars.

"We must look to education in the long run to wipe out that ignorance which threatens catastrophe. Intelligent men do not hate each other just because their religion may be different, because their language and habits may be different, or because their national origin or colour may be different. It is up to education to bring about that deeper international understanding which is so vital to world peace.

"There is at least one defence against this bomb. That defence lies in our mastering the science of human relationships all over the world. It is the defence of tolerance and understanding, intelligence and thoughtfulness: when we have learned these things, we shall be able to prove that Hiroshima was not the end of civilization but the beginning of a new and better world."

Is not this call of the President an echo of the voice that thundered forth 2500 years ago? All the problems of life, whether they be social, political, or religious, subsist in ignorance and wrong-thinking. As they are solved in the heart of each individual, they will be solved in the mass of men. Humanity at present is in the painful stage of "learning." It is confronted with the difficulties of its own ignorance. As men learn to think rightly, learn to direct their forces and use their functions and faculties by the light of wisdom, they will learn to live rightly.

What, however, do we mean by thinking rightly? In an elementary way we mean controlling and guiding the thoughts so that only the highest and best are entertained. It means choosing our thoughts, rejecting those which are either bad or not the highest that we are capable of thinking, and thinking only those thoughts that are the best we know. For instance, instead of allowing thoughts of jealousy or resentment to occupy the mind, we exert the will so that the mind thinks only thoughts of goodwill, forgiveness and brotherly love. Instead of allowing thoughts of impurity or sensual love to enter the mind, we think instead only of *Maitri*, that greater love that transcends sex, or self, or time and space.

Again, we do not allow thoughts of envy or covetousness to possess our mind, when we are nearly knocked off our feet by the air suction caused by a lordly saloon car, costing tens of thousands of rupees, as it flashes past us, or when we see a lovely mansion gleaming amid a beautiful flower garden, we do not covet wealth or possessions even though we do not yet possess the spiritual insight

which makes us smile at the thought, and ask with Mahatma Gandhi: "Are they happy in it?" but instead we bless the owners and wish for their happiness.

This may seem foolish to many, but it is the only way to liberation and freedom from the tyranny of the ruinous passion for possession. In the mad race toward our misconceived Utopia we overlook many of the simple little beauties and blessings of life. We are so busy chasing rainbows of material gain that we haven't time to appreciate the sunlight of spiritual possessions.

Did you ever stop to watch children at play and wish again that *you* might know that happy abandon which doesn't even dream of the problems ahead?

Do you ever halt in wonderment at the sight of some beautiful garden, or come up short in front of a florist's window and pay starry-eyed tribute to the riot of colour and sweetness?

Does a lump ever come into your throat when some helplessly crippled fellow-being shambles by, and do you silently give thanks that you are not so inescapably burdened?

If you have known none of these attitudes—Comrade, you aren't living; you're just skidding through. There is so much beauty in the world to appreciate without possession, that we should be ashamed of ourselves for ever allowing thoughts of worldly desire to possess our minds.

Thomas A. Edison once said that we do not know one millionth part of one per cent about anything. Then it's up to us to learn—by opening our minds in the direction of better things; by letting our minds drink deep of life's almost awesome possibilities; by reaching out for stars with fingers that have known only mire.

Happiness is not in getting. It is in appreciating and working toward an ideal. "There is no sure shield against the tyranny of this ruinous passion for possession," says Britain's gentle, eloquent, 80 year old teacher, W. Macneile Dixon, "save a transference of our affections from possession to admiration, from immoderate craving for wealth and power to an intense longing for beauty and excellence."

Right thinking, such as we have just briefly and partially described, has been practised by the brave and noble of all ages. When the masses have wanted to give in, the brave few have refused to entertain thoughts of fear and failure. When given opportunities of revenge, they have refused to think of retaliation, and have been magnanimous instead.

All that a man achieves, and all that he fails to achieve, is the direct result of his own thoughts. In a justly ordered universe, where loss of equipoise would mean total destruction, individual responsibility must be absolute. A man's weakness and strength, purity and impurity, are his own, and not another man's; they are brought about by himself, and not by another; and they can only be altered by himself, never by another. His condition is also his own, and not another man's. His suffering and his happiness are evolved from within. As he thinks, so he is; as he continues to think, so he remains.

The outward action is simply the fruit of thought. When the Buddha said:

“ By oneself is evil done ; by oneself is one defiled.
By oneself is evil abstained ; by oneself is one purified.
Each for himself is pure ; each for himself impure,
Thou canst not cleanse another's impurity, ”

He meant that our every thought must be pure and lovely and perfect, and not merely that our actions should conform to a certain high standard. At the very springs of our being, the very source, before thoughts can form in us, we have to be cleansed and brought into correspondence with the conception of the unity of all existence.

FASTING, CONCENTRATION AND MEDITATION

So will we find that right thinking is really discipline of mind ; and DISCIPLINE OF MIND AND SELF-CONTROL are based upon Fasting, Concentration and Meditation.

The psychological factors of development have a mighty influence on the individual ; they can be used at will for giving both to the body and to the mind their ultimate shape. The aptitude for improvising a fitting response to all situations depends on precise qualities of the nervous system, the organs, and the mind. These qualities can be developed by definite psychological agencies. We know that mental and moral disciplines, for instance, bring about a better equilibrium of the sympathetic system, a more complete integration of all organic and mental activities. These agencies can be divided into two classes : those acting from without, and those acting from within. To the first class belong all reflexes and states of consciousness imposed on the subject by other individuals or by his social environment ; insecurity or security,

poverty or wealth, effort, struggle, idleness, responsibility, create certain mental states capable of moulding human beings in an almost specific manner. The second class comprises the factors which modify the subject from within, such as Fasting, Concentration and Meditation.

No discovery of modern psychology is so important as its scientific proof of the necessity of self-sacrifice to self-realisation. By nature, the individual is selfish, and inclined to follow his immediate impulses. The personality tests and the clinical experience of psychologists prove conclusively that this road leads to introversion, to emotional instability, to intellectual futility, to maladjustment, to unhappiness. It requires religion, something higher than the individual, to overcome the selfish impulses of the natural man and lead him to a more successful life.

It would be absurd to expect that a person who is given to too much self-indulgence can endure much suffering or show unusual self-control or behave like a hero when the crisis comes. To be in good moral condition requires at least as much training as to be in good physical condition. The sacrifice of immediate desires and inclinations for the performance of some less pleasant task leads to a steady increase in the individual's range of interests, likes and successes.

Everyone ought to know how to Fast on occasion. Anyone can try fasting healthily for a few days, and discover that it rallies the spirit and relieves emotional strain.

The first day results in something akin to the agony of a drunkard deprived of his bottle ; the second day one may feel dispirited and weak ; but later one comes upon that experience which has led men in so many civilizations to value fasting as an introduction to the spiritual life. The thought of food practically disappears from the mind. One feels light and happy. There is a general brilliance of sensation, as if both sight and hearing were intensified. If—literally or figuratively—the man who fasts is in a position of uncertainty, lost in a wild country, he may through his starvation have a wonderful accession of Faith (*saddha*), and Insight (*vipassanā*).

Faith is not merely the belief in the existence of a thing or in the truth of it, but it is also the confidence in the power of that thing. So is religious faith the belief and the confidence in the power of the Good, whatever different names be given to it. Insight is a faculty of the mind whereby we are enabled to examine facts and conditions at long range ; it is the ability to understand basic motives, in ourselves and in others. Insight enables us to change,

desirable conditions. Just as an athlete requires to train his body, mind has also to be trained and brought under control.

The mind is like a horse. If it is untrained, it is of no use. The best horse is of no value if its master cannot make it go where he wants it to go, but a horse that can be controlled is a great asset. A good mind is likewise of comparatively little use unless it can be controlled, but a trained mind is one of the greatest assets a man can have.

The Buddha's discourses contain many beautiful exhortations on the culture of the mind. In *Sabbasava Sutta* the Buddha says: "A follower wisely reflecting, when there has sprung up within him a lustful thought that he endureth not, he puts it away, he destroys it, he makes it not to be : when there has sprung up within him an angry thought, a malicious thought, some sinful, wrong disposition that he endureth not, he puts it away, he destroys it, he maketh it not to be...He cultivates that part of the higher wisdom called Mindfulness, that called Search after Truth, that called Energy, that called Joy, that called Peace, that called Earnest Contemplation, that called Equanimity, each dependent on seclusion, dependent on passionlessness, dependent on the utter ecstasy of contemplation, resulting in the passing off of individuality."

Meditation or *Samadhi* is unquestionably the heart of Buddhism. Meditation holds refreshment and rest, conserves energy for future needs, and helps to keep life balanced and elastic. Through it we often arrive at a revision of values which helps inward development.

No special or definite technique is required. It is simply a matter of freeing one's mind and allowing it to wander in peace beyond the objectives and so-called "practical" things of the present.

It is no more than deliberately bidding one's thoughts to take a holiday and leave the lesser realities of every-day life, and thus purposively producing the same state of mind which one automatically falls into when listening to beautiful music or looking into a sunset or gazing at great mountains. The attitude is one of wonder without expectancy or contemplation without planning or striving.

In time of trouble, when one is harried by anxiety or is under some other emotional stress, there is no more reliable method of attaining Mental Tranquillity. Nor is there any which is so economical of time and energy in helping one to regain control of reason and judgment. Meditation, as a way of using leisure moments,

is available to every one regardless of age or experience, and it is an important part of living wisely.

To start the process of meditation one needs only to "shove the mind off" on the right track. This preliminary direction should urge the mind upward and outward in the direction of the universal and impersonal, rather than downward and inward toward the specific egocentric.

Tired of practical planning and specific thinking, the mind leaves all such narrow thoughts with surprising ease. The best way to initiate the process is through short periods of concentration on some general and abstract idea, such as the nature of beauty, the meaning of truth, the destiny of the human race, or any one of the eternal verities of religion.

A beautiful practice in Buddhism is meditation on the four *Brahma-viharas*, or "Sublime Raptures" of *Mettā* (universal love or goodwill), *Karuṇā* (universal compassion), *Muditā* (joy in the prosperity and happiness of all), and *Upekkhā* (equanimity, indifference to the vicissitudes of life, non-attachment to the things of this world). The object of this four-fold meditation is not only to produce these four states in oneself, but to radiate to all living beings goodwill, compassion, sympathetic joy, unshakable poise. One of the sanest, surest and most generous joys of life comes from being happy over the good fortune of others.

These four Sublime Raptures, founded on the affections, carry the follower out of himself through every region of the universe. He is bidden to let his love pervade every quarter of the world. Love reveals the pains and sorrows of all animated beings, the sight of suffering begets compassion; compassion awakens sympathy; and sympathy teaches equanimity towards all, and everywhere love-burdened thought makes its way, "abounding, sublime beyond measure, free from hatred and ill-will."

By means of such meditations the true nature of life would appear to the follower, and he would return to his work in the world, whatever it might be, strengthened, and having obtained a mastery over his desires that would in the true sense give him a real control of mental states, and enable him to see things in the light of Universal Love.

HAPPINESS A BY-PRODUCT

The greatest gift in the world, to those around us, is the gift of love, and love does not cost money. The simple truth is that,

while poverty may be hard and humiliating to ourselves, it does not restrict what we can do for others. We can give gloriously, generously, exhaustlessly, without ever opening our purses.

Many people have a puritanical feeling that they are not giving unless they are sacrificing, which is akin to the old idea that, unless medicine tastes bitter, it can have no virtue. Men and women whose hearts are bigger than their pocket-books know better. By exercising their ingenuity, they find unusual methods of bringing happiness to others, and, incidentally, pleasure to themselves. You should remember that, though another may have more money, beauty, brains than you have, yet when it comes to the rarer spiritual values such as generosity, self-sacrifice, honour, nobility of heart, you have an equal chance with everyone to be the most beloved and honoured of all people.

No, you do not have to be rich to be generous, but most of us are rich in the possessions which make generosity possible. If he has the spirit of true generosity, a pauper can give like a prince. "Rings and jewels are not gifts, but apologies for gifts. The only gift is a portion of thyself...Therefore the poet brings his poem; the shepherd, his lamb; the farmer, corn; the miner, a gem; the sailor, coral and shells; the painter, his picture; the girl, a handkerchief of her own sewing," says Emerson.

The doctrine that happiness may not be pursued directly is Aristotle's. Happiness, he pointed out, is a by-product; it is a sign that the organism is functioning rightly in relation to that for which it is fitted. He compares happiness to the bloom on the cheek of a young man in perfect health; the bloom is not a cause or a part of the health, it is a sign of it.

And just as to get the bloom you must first be healthy, so to get the happiness you must first function rightly. This doctrine—that you cannot take the kingdom of happiness by storm—is part of a secular wisdom of the ages; pursue happiness directly and it will elude you; give all your energies to a creed or cause, lift yourself up out of the selfish little pit of vanity and desire which is the self in service to something that is greater than the self and, in looking back, you will find that you have been happy.

Happiness, in short, is not a house that can be built by men's hands, it is a flower that surprises you, a song that you hear as you pass the hedgerow, rising suddenly and simply into the night and dying down again.

What happiness is, no person can say for another. But no one can be happy who lives only for himself. Happiness is a quality

and an attribute of the good life. It is evanescent. If we want to know what happiness is we must seek it, not as if it were a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow, but among human beings who are living richly and fully the good life. If you observe a really happy man you will find him building a home, writing a poem, educating his son, growing flowers in his garden. He will not be searching for happiness as if it were a collar button that has rolled under the bed. He will have become aware that he is happy in the course of living twenty-four crowded hours of the day.

To find happiness we must seek for it in a focus outside ourselves. If you live only for yourself you are always in immediate danger of being bored to death with the repetition of your own views and interests. It matters little, for psychological purposes, whether you interest yourself in making your town cleaner, or enlist in a temperance campaign, or whether you go in for Community Centres.

The joy of living comes from immersion in something that we know to be bigger, better, more enduring and worthier than we are: people, ideas, causes—these offer the one possible escape not merely from selfishness but from the hungers of solitude and the sorrows of aimlessness. No person is as uninteresting as a person without interests.

The pitiful people are those who in their living elect to be spectators rather than participants; the tragic ones are those sightseers who turn their backs deliberately on the procession. The only true happiness comes from squandering ourselves for a purpose.

A strand in the pattern of a happy life is unselfish devotion to persons and causes outside oneself. Human personality is not made to be self-centred. To get out of oneself, to find something worth while living for, to put oneself into some strenuous endeavour, to fall in love with another person, discover a challenging vocation, plunge into an exciting adventure, or go all out for a good cause, is the essential condition of a happy life.

Never before have there been so many profoundly important causes crying for intelligent social co-operation. You can hardly name a sphere of human activity, be it politics or international peace, be it commerce or medicine, literature or philosophy, in which there is not a cry for leaders. Mankind must make civilization work. No one need ever be unhappy who sees this task clearly. Choose a movement that presents a distinct trend toward greater human happiness and align yourself with it. No one has learned the meaning of living until he has surrendered his ego to the service of his fellow men.

When we look into the long avenue of the future, and see the good there is for each one of us to do, we realise, after all, what a beautiful thing it is to look, and to live, and be happy. To live in thoughts of love, kindness, goodwill, and service for all of one's neighbours and for all people, instead of with thoughts of malice or envy or jealousy or pride, leads into no Blind Alley. It leads out and triumphantly out on to the great plain of clear vision, of unself-centred activity, of heroic endeavour and accomplishment.

Thus truly did Morton Luce declare in his *Thysia*:

And he that liveth to himself is dead,
And he that lives for love lives evermore ;
Only in love can life's true path be trod ;
Love is self-giving ; therefore love is God.

Thus is ended the Exposition entitled "The Blind Alleys of *Avidya* " in the *Kalyana Magga*, or "The Path of Happiness."

APPENDIX TWO

BUDDHISM AND THE SĀṆKHYA SYSTEM

THE CONCEPTION of a universal order is of fundamental importance in the religious development of India. It appears in the *Rig Veda*, the most ancient of the sacred books of India, under the name of Rta or Rita. It is usually translated as Order or Right, but it is difficult to find any equivalent for it in modern English since it is at once cosmic, ritual and moral. It is seen primarily in the ordered course of Nature, the succession of the seasons and the movement of the heavens. The year is the wheel of Rita, the wheel with twelve spokes. The sun is "the clear and visible face of Rita," and the rivers follow the sacred Rita in their unceasing flow. Everything that is ordered in the universe has Rita for its principle. It corresponds to the universals of Plato. The world of experience is a shadow or reflection of the Rita, the permanent reality which remains unchanged in all the welter of mutation. The universal is prior to the particular, and so the Vedic seer thinks that Rita exists before the manifestation of all phenomena. But its ethical aspect is even more important. It is usually associated in the *Rig Veda* with Varuna, the righteous god who watches over justice and punishes sin. He is "the foundation of Rita," "the guardian of Holy Rita," and the just man prays that he may help "to increase Varuna's spring of Rita." Finally Rita, like the Latin *ritus*, is pre-eminently applied to the ritual order of the sacrifice. The sacrificial fire is "the shoot of Rita, born in the Rita," and it carries the offerings to the gods by way of Rita.

This aspect of the conception, though it is the most primitive of all, was destined to have the greatest influence on the religious development of India. In the Brahmanas a regular philosophy of ritual was worked out, according to which the order of the sacrifice is the efficient cause of the order of Nature, and the Brahman, the sacred sacrificial formula, is conceived as the ultimate force behind the universe.

The progress of Indian thought from the religion of the Brahmanas to the religion of the Upanishads, consist in the conversion of this primitive idea of Brahman into an absolute metaphysical principle. The first step in the development took place when men transferred the value of the rites from their external performance to their esoteric significance. The idea of Brahman was abstracted

from the sacrifice which became merely a symbolic representation of the higher reality. At first this reality was conceived cosmologically as the world essence or universal substance : Brahman was identified with space or with Prana, the breath of life. But these cosmological explanations did not satisfy the quest for reality which inspired the thinkers of the Upanishads. They sought not merely to get beyond the mythology and the external ritual of religious tradition, but to pass beyond the outward appearance of things, beyond the created universe, so as to reach the one absolute being which alone is true, which alone is.

Now the great achievement of the thinkers of the Upanishads, the discovery which has dominated Indian religion and thought ever since, was the identification of this supreme principle with the *Atman* or Self. This Self or soul is the ground of everything that exists, it is "the web on which the world is woven." Above all, it is the ground of our own consciousness, "the soul of our souls," for the human self and the Ultimate Self or Reality are in a sense identical.

The highest reason of man, as well as his deepest intuition has always recognized that underlying all forms and manifestations, there must be a Reality from which all things flow. All philosophies, all religions, inform us that this world of shapes, forms and names is but a phenomenal or shadow world back of which rests Reality, called by some name of the teacher. Man has always recognized that this Reality or Absolute must be but one, of which all Nature is but varying degrees of manifestation. All have recognized that life is a stream flowing from one great fount, the nature and name of which is unknown—some have said unknowable. It is only when men begin to name and analyze this one, that confusion results. And although men may differ, dispute, wrangle, and quarrel about this Ultimate Reality, still there is one point upon which they all agree, and that is that Reality is eternal or deathless (*amata*).

THE BUDDHA'S teaching cannot be fully explained by itself. It was expressed in accordance with the conceptions of the Brahmin world in the sixth century B.C., and as it continued to develop, it took for granted all the current views on the nature of the world and man so far as they were not in conflict with its own principles. The Buddhism that has come down to us is not merely the kernel of the new doctrine, but the actual system with all that it assimilated from the thought and social conditions of its environment, or adopted as it attracted new followers.

The problem of the relation of Buddhism to Brahminism and of their interaction as religious and philosophical schools runs throughout the whole history. But Brahminism was not merely a rival ; it was in the first place the system in the midst of which Buddhism originated. Buddhism inherited many of the current Brahminical doctrines, its cosmology and theory of recurring cycles were fundamentally the same as the Brahminical. An extensive influence of Sāṅkhya on Buddhism was held by Jacobi, who derived the Chain of Causation (*Paticca Samuppada*), from the series found in the Sāṅkhya system in its classical form. This system, as is well known, explains the evolution of the universe from a primitive undifferentiated matter called *Prakṛti* (Nature).

The Sāṅkhya system, developed by Kapila, was probably the earliest mental philosophy known to the world. It arose from the ground work of the Upanishads, supplemented by long periods of observation and speculation. It was the first serious philosophical attempt to explain in exoteric language the process of the universe and of man's relation thereto. But it was not the only attempt. As the Vedānta philosophy, rising from the same soil, developed towards idealism and monism, the Sāṅkhya, on the contrary, which had no doubt once been idealistic, tended towards dualism.

Buddhism, which is often regarded as based on the Sāṅkhya philosophy, is rather a development of both Vedānta and the Sāṅkhya, being both monistic and realistic in that it accepts the reality behind the visible universe and finds a fundamental unifying force in it. It is a question whether Buddhism borrowed from early Sāṅkhya or the Sāṅkhya borrowed from Buddhism.

Reference to the Sāṅkhya seems to have been made in the *Dīgha Nikaya*. In the "Brahmajāla Sutta" we read *Sassatō attā ca lōcō ca vanjhō kūtatthō ēsikāttahayitthitō...atthi tveva sassati samanti*. Pointing out the simile of *kūtattha* (=Sāṅkhya; *kūtaṣṭha*)—standing on a mountain-peak—some scholars have suggested that the reference is to the Sāṅkhya. But, as Dr. Thomas points out *kūtattha* is applicable only to the *Purusa* (of the Sāṅkhya). Although the later full-fledged Sāṅkhya system is not expressed by this statement it may suggest that the germs of later Sāṅkhya, yet undeveloped, were found during the days of early Buddhism. In fact Prof. Radhakrishnan ventures to say that the Buddha must have known the beginnings of the Sāṅkhya. He seems to think that the Buddha must have realised that "salvation was isolation from *Prakṛti* (Nature)."

Buddhism postulates *avidya* (ignorance), as the cause of sorrow. This concept is common to both Buddhism and the Sāṅkhya. Both the systems maintain that *avidya* is the root-cause of suffering. *Avidya*, according to Buddhism, is the ignorance of the true nature of things, or, the inability to see things in their true perspective (*yathābhutam*). But *avidya*, according to the Sāṅkhya, means "discriminative knowledge" (*viveka jñāna*). *Viveka jñāna* is the knowledge with which the individual could discriminate between his "self" (which is in bondage to his body) and the rest of his constituents which are not the self, and the Sāṅkhya way of liberation is by overcoming *avidya*. In other words, it is the discerning knowledge which enables a man to discriminate between the "self" and the "not self." The individual on attaining *viveka jñāna* becomes capable of seeing the self, and the not self, separately, and consequently attains release from bondage. The Buddha says that there is neither a self (*atta*) nor anything to be looked upon as belonging to the self (*attaniya*). He maintains that the clinging to the theory of self arises through delusion regarding the relation of owner and possession (*atta* and *attaniya*).

Both the Sāṅkhya and Buddhism agree that a cessation of suffering is possible. But the two systems diverge in the methods prescribed for this end. The Sāṅkhya resorts to the Yoga-methods. Buddhism prescribes a code of ethics, the Eightfold Path. No such code of ethics is formulated in the Sāṅkhya philosophy.

The Sāṅkhya seeks to get rid of the individual self by immersion in the universal self ; but in its isolation it leaves the rest of the world to look after itself and is but seeking its own salvation or escape from the toils of individual existence. Only in active altruism, in the Eightfold Path, could the Buddha's Way be trodden. The nature of the way shows clearly the nature of the liberation which it offers. The freedom offered was not the philosopher's or Yogi's escape from a world of sorrow and illusion, not the ascetic's aloofness from the world of labour and duty, but the plain and kindly man's emergence from the dominion of self-interest, out of which he is guided by his fellow-traveller, the bhikkhu.

The system of Kapila is essentially a philosophy. Practically, as some of our modern philosophers, he had no theology. He admitted, indeed, the existence of gods, but they were only emanations from *Prakṛti* (Nature), and are to be absorbed hereafter into this all-comprehending source, as all other forms of material life. He rejects, with evident scorn, the rites which the Vedās assumed or commanded. In his view they were both impure and

inefficient. They enjoined sacrifice, which he rejected because it required the shedding of blood, and it could not procure the final liberation of the soul from the bondage of a material connection. Neither religion nor morality could avail to procure this supreme state. It could only be gained by knowledge, nor yet by every kind of knowledge; but only by the Sāṅkhya philosophy, whereby the soul gains a knowledge of the external world and of its own higher nature.

This was the sole purpose of Kapila's philosophy. He had no desire to raise mankind to a higher degree of moral excellence or a more perfect civilization, either as a means to provide more amply for the uses or the pleasures of his kind, or to gratify a love of knowledge for its own sake. To him, the world of matter, enfolding and producing so much pain, is to be regarded only as an enemy. Our present physical life is a mere bondage; it is full of pain; it can never be the source of anything but sorrow and degradation. The aim of philosophy is simply to free the soul from this and every other connection with matter for ever. We must seek to cast it away, as men cast off a vile and loathsome garment, and this emancipation must be gained by the soul itself, without the aid—if such aid can be obtained—of any external power or influence.

The system of Kapila, if it had been generally adopted, would have been as fatal to the Vedāntist ritual and doctrine as that of the Buddha, which was the natural result or logical issue of the earlier system. In each, knowledge and meditation took the place of religious rites; but Kapila established no society of monks and no Order; he knew nothing of sympathy with mankind in general; he addressed himself to thinkers like himself, and to these alone. Hence his system remained only as a philosophical theory, affecting the whole course of Hindu thought in some respects, chiefly in its physical speculations, but never attaining to a practical supremacy over large masses of men. It was never embodied and crystallised in a concrete form, and as a complete system it has been preserved only as an intellectual product or as an esoteric doctrine, understood and accepted by a small inner circle of free-thinking men.

THE ONE END of life, the one task for the wise man, is Deliverance; to cross the bridge, to pass the ford from death to Life, from appearance to Reality, from time to Eternity—all the goods of human life in the family or the State are vanity in comparison with this. And so there arose in ancient India a whole series of different

schools of thought, each of which attempted to find the way of deliverance by means of some special discipline of salvation. The way of deliverance by the knowledge of the *Atman* is the classical example of these systems, and it has remained the basis of orthodox Indian thought ever since. Nevertheless, it does not stand alone; even in the Upanishads themselves it co-exists with other elements which were destined to become the bases of independent systems of thought. There was the old ritual doctrine of salvation by works which remained the normal belief of orthodox Brahminic society, there were the cosmological theories which ultimately issued in the Sāṅkhya philosophy, and finally there was the way of deliverance through asceticism, whether physical austerities and penance or by mental concentration and self-discipline.

This is the most important element of all, since it underlies the whole religious development from the age of the *Rig Veda* down to the rise of the great monastic orders of the Jains and the Buddhists. But the ascetic ideal underwent a gradual change under the influence of the new movement of thought. The figure of the Muni or Shaman who acquires magical powers by self-torture and physical austerities gives place to that of the monk who seeks salvation by meditation and self-discipline, in the same way that the conception of Brahman became transformed from a magical spell into a transcendent spiritual principle.

It was in Buddhism that self-discipline found its highest expression, and Buddhism is also the most complete and thorough-going example of the new disciplines of salvation. To the thinkers of the Upanishads, primarily interested in their speculations concerning Brahman and the true nature of being, deliverance was a secondary question. To the Buddhist, on the other hand, the problem of deliverance was the one vital issue. "One thing only do I teach, O Brethren," said the Buddha, "sorrow and the ending of sorrow." "As the sea has everywhere one taste, the taste of salt, so my teaching has one flavour, the flavour of deliverance."

Whilst the Buddha, in remarkable contrast with His later followers, steadily refused to interest Himself in metaphysical discussions, it was nevertheless impossible for Him to dissociate His mind entirely from such considerations. After long and eager study of the philosophical thought of His day and the practice of Yoga under Brahminical teachers, and after years devoted to intense contemplation, He arrived at the conclusions stated in His first discourse. These conclusions are purely ethical outwardly,

but they are necessarily based upon His previous metaphysical analysis of human life and of the universe. He himself found it unnecessary to state these bases, except cursorily; He did not wish to be entangled in unpractical discussions, which might be endlessly prolonged by the learned without light. He hesitated to preach the doctrine in its metaphysical shape, but He did not hesitate to state it in its ethical form. But the metaphysical form remains as the background or the basis of the ethical teaching.

The Buddha expressly condemned all attempts to enquire into or to define the ultimate source of all existence. Beyond finding the fundamental and eternal principle to be universal and harmonious, and declaring the origin of all discord to be in transient individuality, He refused to speculate. Salvation was to be found not in metaphysical knowledge, but in the strenuous moral endeavour which destroys desire, the root of all suffering and of physical existence itself.

Thus Buddhism arose as a movement of reaction from the intellectualism of the Upanishads and the philosophical schools. It reasserted the moral element of the conception of Rita—Order—which had been subordinated to its ritual and cosmological aspects ever since the days of the *Rig Veda*. It stands in the same opposition to the Upanishads, as Confucianism did to Taoism—as a moral discipline against a mystical cosmology and a metaphysical doctrine of Being. Like Confucianism, it claimed to be the “doctrine of the Mean,” which alone can afford a true form of behaviour for the guidance of the follower.

Man’s highest good lay in acting in harmony with the universe. Man is part of the universe and he should submit to the rule of the laws of the universe ; he should live according to the laws of Nature, the immanent order (Dharma). Mal-adjustment to this order (Adharma) is the “sorrowful wheel ” of existence driven round by lust, enmity and ignorance, and the path of moral deliverance is the “Middle Way ” of the extinction of desire which leads to Nirvana.

“ In the mind of him who realises the insecurity of this transient life arises the thought: All on fire is this ceaseless flux, a blazing flame ! Full of despair it is and very fearful ! Oh that I might reach a state where I am at peace with myself ! How calm, how sweet would be that end of all defects, of all craving and passion—that great Peace—this Nirvana ? ” “ Is there any place where a man may stand, and, ordering his life aright, realize Nirvana ? ” “ Yes, O King, Virtue is that place.” (*Milinda Panha*).

Thus in Buddhism the ethical tendencies of the new movement of thought attained their extreme development. Virtue alone is good, not rank or riches, not race or nationality. Nothing but goodness is good. The absolute supremacy of the moral law—the Dharma—was secured, and the whole of existence was reduced to purely spiritual and ethical terms.

“The knowledge and insight which Gotama sought and found are rather scientific than metaphysical,” says J. G. Jennings in *The Vedantic Buddhism of the Buddha*, “He sought to penetrate phenomena and find the stable basis supporting their fluctuating forms, rather than to rise above the material world to a higher sphere of spirit. Realizing that everything which has a cause has also a cessation, he strove to attain in thought to the uncaused cause, the *amata*, the *akata*, which, being ever One and the self-same, suffers no increase or diminution, no origination or decay. From this origin all transient phenomena arise spontaneously, and thus they are made of it rather than by it and are interfused by it rather than transcended by it. In their non-realization of this fundamental union, in the egotism and desirousness of individuals, lies the cause of sorrow.”

The word *Amata* which plays so important a part in the Buddhist teaching, and which is commonly translated “Nirvana,” really signifies the fundamental and eternal principle. The state of harmony with this fundamental unity is Nirvana, hence originated the practice of describing Nirvana as *Amata*. Today the word *Amata* is used exclusively to denote Nirvana and has lost its original and more important meaning, namely the Ultimate Reality. The passages in the *Udana* reading: “There is, O Brethren, that which is unborn, which has not become, is uncreate and unevolved . . .” and, “where there is neither earth, nor water, nor fire, . . .” are generally taken as describing Nirvana, but it is meaningless to describe Nirvana in these terms. These descriptions really refer to the Ultimate Reality and have probably been borrowed from the expressions applied to Brahman in the Upanishads.

The *Udana* describes this de-personalized reality as “where there is neither earth, nor water, nor fire, nor air, neither infinity of space, nor infinity of consciousness, nor nothingness, nor perceptions, nor absence of perception, neither this world nor any other, neither sun nor moon, neither arising nor passing away nor standing still, neither a being born nor a dying, neither substance nor development nor any basis for substance.” This description of the

Ultimate Reality, without any positive attributes, reminds one of the expressions *neti, neti* (not this, not this) applied to Brahman in the Upanishads.

All material existences are only developed modes of the One. In like manner, some of the Greek philosophers inferred, as a necessity of thought, that the many forms of sensible objects must be referred to one primeval substance as their source. They affirmed, as Kapila, that this was not one of the gross elements, as fire or water, but an invisible, universal, and formless substance ; thus says Plato in the *Timaeus* : "This mother and receptacle of all visible and sensible things we do not call earth, nor air, nor fire, nor water, nor anything produced from them, or from which these are produced. It is an invisible and formless thing, the recipient of everything (all-embracing), participating in a certain way of the intelligible, but in a way very difficult to seize."

It seems, in so far as it can be grasped, the Ultimate Reality that creates and sustains and directs all existence is always the same. It is ineffable, inexpressible, universal. Dionysius the Areopagite says: "The cause of all things is neither soul nor intellect, nor has it imagination, opinion or reason or intelligence ; nor is it reason or intelligence; nor is it spoken or thought. It is neither number nor order, nor magnitude nor littleness, nor equality nor inequality, nor similarity nor dissimilarity. It neither stands nor moves nor rests. . . . It is neither essence nor eternity nor time. Even intellectual contact does not belong to it. It is neither science nor truth. It is not even royalty nor wisdom ; not one; not unity. Not divinity or goodness nor even spirit as we know it."

Here is another Western echo of an Eastern conclusion (See page 377). The Reality is indescribable, it is to be described by "Not this ! Not this !" The human understanding is inadequate to cognize 'the reality behind the form.' "All forms contain an element of untruth and Reality is beyond them," wrote the great Eastern sage Samkara, and because this is the case, Indian teachers of religion assume an attitude of silence when questioned by their disciples concerning the nature of Reality.

Because we are human beings and not mere animals, we try to discover as much as we can about the world in which our lives are cast. The first thing that we learn from such questioning is that the world is rational; its happenings are not determined by caprice but by law. There exists what we call a 'pattern of events.' If there is a pattern there must be some sort of loom

for ever weaving it; men have always wanted to know what this loom is, how it works, and why it works thus rather than otherwise. But today, with all our advance in science, we have not come a step nearer than the thinkers of 2500 years ago to the understanding of the nature of this loom or Reality, and to all intellectual questioning about it the answer is still "Not this ! Not this !"

The true greatness and originality of the Buddha consists in His having given the ritual order an ethical content. Instead of regarding the rites as magically efficacious or being satisfied with an exterior standard of obedience to them, He demanded the interior adhesion of the whole man ; the conformity of the individual not to an external correctness of behaviour, but to the order which governs not only the life of society but also the whole course of Nature. The ideal man must conform himself to the universal harmony not only in his outward conduct, but in his mind and in his will. Thus the great Buddhist virtue of *Maitri*, or Universal Love, is not an emotional love of others, it is the renunciation of self-interest and egotism, and the merging of self in the universal order.

The Buddha devised the Eightfold Path, a code of ethics or rules of conduct for the follower, which has for its object the shaking off of selfish desires and attainment thereby to the tranquillity of Nirvana, wherein the universal harmony is realized. Herein it is realized that the *Amata*, the "Eternal" or the "Deathless" is the origin of the whole universe of beauty and right impulse ; sorrow finding its natural source in the discords of fleeting individual desires. The "Eternal" or the "Deathless" may be either Nirvana, the state of harmony with the fundamental unity, or that unity itself, the *Akata*, the "Uncreated," the Reality whence arise for ever the harmonies of goodness, truth and beauty, and in departure from which arise sorrow, error and discord, the fires of lust, of enmity and of ignorance.

Thus the old ritual order of the archaic culture became, in the hands of the Buddha, the basis of an ethical interpretation of life. The knowledge of the Ultimate Reality was sought not, as in the earlier period, for the power that it conferred over Nature or to rise above the material world to a higher sphere of spirit, but for its own sake as the supreme good. True happiness is to be found only in the state of harmony with the eternal principle. Thus the conception of a transcendent reality became the foundation of a new moral ideal.

PART III

RAJJAÑ CA PAJĀ CA

“MAN AND THE STATE”

“ Man is born free ; and everywhere he is in chains.”

—ROUSSEAU.

**“ While the State exists there is no freedom: When
there is freedom there will be no State.”**

—LENIN.

Chapter I

THE SOVIET STATE

“ Ideas are born as the sparks fly upward. They die from their own weakness ; they are whirled away by the wind ; they are lost in the smoke ; they vanish in the darkness of the night. Someone throws on another log of trouble and effort, and fresh myriads of sparks stream ineffectually into the air. Men have always tended these fires, casting into them the fruits of their toil—indeed, all they can spare after keeping body and soul together. Sometimes, at rare intervals, something exciting results from their activities. Among innumerable sparks that flash and fade away, there now and again gleams one that lights up not only the immediate scene but the whole world. What is it that distinguishes the fortunes of one of these potent incendiary or explosive ideas from the endless procession of its fellows? It is always something very simple and—once the surroundings are illuminated—painfully obvious. In fact we may say that the power and vitality of an idea result from a spontaneous recognition of the obvious.

“ For instance, not far from the fire there is a rubbish heap, and as the weather has been very dry for some time and the night breeze is blowing in that direction, one single spark out of all the millions has suddenly acquired enormous importance. It has fallen glowing upon the rubbish ; and there is the heap beginning to smoulder, smoke and break into flame, and already there is a blaze and everyone can see for himself the rubbish heap and that the spark has set it alight. No one knows how far the flames will go, whose buildings will be threatened or what will happen next. There is no lack of excitement and bustling about and running around, and no one—not even the slowest—has any doubt but that something unusual has happened, or that it arose from the spark and the rubbish heap coming together in this way. But what to do about it is quite a different tale.”

—WINSTON S. CHURCHILL in an article entitled “ The United States of Europe ” in *The Saturday Evening Post* of February 15, 1930.

(1) Lenin: Founder of the Soviet State

So, when in 1935, the anopheles mosquito discovered an immense “ rubbish heap ” in Lanka, it became quite evident that a new series of events had opened ; and what to do about it, in the words of Mr. Churchill, “ is quite a different tale.”

When a civilization is nearing an abyss, Nature, always willing to help mankind, gives warning. Throughout the course of history there are innumerable instances of this flashing of danger signals. But mankind, in its blindness and in its stupidity, has seldom responded to them.

It is one of the greatest ironies of history that, in our own blessed land, Nature—or is it Vishnu, the guardian deity of Lanka—should employ the lowly mosquito, named Public Enemy No. 1 of Ceylon, to flash the danger signals and give warning to us that our own civilization, such as it is and has been, is nearing an abyss.

A sense of impending change has come to the minds of men in all periods of history. Greek and Roman writers have left on record how they felt this premonition before the overthrow of their civilizations and the downfall of their ancient gods, in whom they no longer believed.

Before the French Revolution many of the aristocrats and intellectuals of that country were conscious of the impending struggle in which their caste, their way of life, their ancient system would be destroyed.

In Russia there were similar forebodings: a sense of impending doom to Tsardom and the social order, long before the name of Lenin was known to the world. Her defeat by the Japanese was followed by the revolution of 1905. But Tsardom heeded not the warning. It preferred to attempt to put down the revolution with fiendish cruelty and preserve the "rubbish heap" for posterity as a museum exhibit, and plunged headlong, in 1917, to the abyss of lost civilizations.

Lenin, after his Siberian exile, had travelled to Germany where in December, 1900, he published the first issue of *Iskra*, "The Spark," in collaboration with the Geneva Communist group. Under the title was the significant quotation: "The spark will break into flame." It broke into flame in 1917, and lit the funeral pyre of the Russian monarchy. The Romanoffs went down in the crackle of the flaming "rubbish heap," set fire to by a "glowing spark" from the fires which Lenin and his apostles had been tending for years, "casting into it the fruits of their toil." Lenin was a prophet of the event before it occurred, and Churchill after it.

The British Museum has played a more decisive part in shaping world history than many an arsenal. In its Reading Room those who tended the fires, sparks from which set ablaze the Russian "rubbish heap," spent many hours forging their 'secret' weapons.

Not only Marx, but Herzen and Lenin as well, were assiduous Museum readers. Here, among endless bookshelves, the restless spirits worked with tenacity and devotion. They distilled the

dynamite of radical action from the streams of printers' ink. They repulped the books to living spirit—that spirit which at a later stage shaped the steel and concrete from which the Soviet Union was built.

BIRTH OF A DREAM

In Moscow each day long lines of pilgrims form in front of the black mausoleum in Red Square, then move silently into the heavily guarded shrine to view momentarily the corpse that was once the guiding genius of the Russian people. The man, now resting in a glass casket, gave birth to a dream that was to abolish for ever political tyranny and the exploitation of man by man in Russia and elsewhere. That dream had given new hope to the Russian masses who for centuries had fared poorly under their rulers.

There can be no question that Lenin wanted to better his people's lives. For dedicating himself to this goal, he was arrested, sent to Siberia and spent many years in involuntary exile in western Europe. "The basic cause of social excesses," he argued, "is the exploitation of the masses. The removal of this cause will lead to the withering away of excesses, and simultaneously with their disappearance, the State will die."

"Democracy from below!" he declared before he seized power. "Democracy without an officialdom, without police, without a standing army. The State itself will wither away, in virtue of the simple fact that, freed from the innumerable absurdities and infamies of capitalist exploitation, people will gradually become accustomed to the observation of the elementary rules of social life, repeated for thousands of years in all-sermons. They will become accustomed to their observance without constraint, without the special apparatus for compulsion which is called the State!"

Therefore, he resolved that the "cause of all evil, capitalism," should be abolished, the means of production and distribution expropriated and made to work for the State. If the owners declined, he would starve them. If they resisted, he would liquidate them.

He would send his loyal followers to the capitalist countries to learn advanced technology; he would invite foreign specialists to teach his backward people the latest scientific methods in agriculture and industry and help raise the standard of living. To expedite the transformation of his agrarian economy to a highly industrialized one, he would bring experts from foreign countries.

One of his first ambitions was to electrify the country. In thousands of Russian homes even the candle was yet to be discovered. The smoking pine wood kindle pinned to the edge of a table was the only source of illumination. Lenin's Russia would, therefore, jump over the stages of evolution and be planted right into the electrical age.

He would democratize the armed forces by placing the private and the officer on equal footing. The elegant uniforms of officers would be abolished; sons of the poorest peasants and workers would henceforward be eligible for leadership. His new Russia would atone for its past imperialistic sins by renouncing extra-territoriality in China and by returning the loot the Tsar had taken from that country. The forcibly incorporated alien peoples would receive freedom of self-determination.

He hated the Tsar's jurisprudence which had sent him and thousands of others into prisons and Siberian exile. Under his rule not only would there be no political prisoners, but the very word "punishment" would be superseded by the term "measures of protection," the word "prison" would be replaced by "places of detention"; the term "guilt" would be expurgated from the official vocabulary, since only society could be guilty when individual members committed a crime. The incoming inmates to Lenin's "places of detention" would be greeted by large streamers: "We are not being punished; we are being corrected!"

The liquidation of illiteracy would be an early task. Children as well as adults would receive free education, and schools and universities would spring up throughout the country.

With the old order would go organized religion. The official Greek Orthodox Church would be wiped out because of its service to the Romanoff regime, and because "religion is one of the forms of that spiritual yoke which always and everywhere has been laid on the masses of the people crushed by poverty."

These and many more of Lenin's plans were set in motion when the civil war ended in 1921. But the going was rough and not according to schedule. Human reactions had not been considered. The people began to resent the shrinkage of their rights. With one hand the Government abolished the right to execute political offenders, and with the other restored it. The new jurisprudence prohibited the use of chains, handcuffs, dungeons, strict solitary confinement, deprivation of food, isolation from visitors by means of bars, but, within a short time, worse methods were instituted.

There was a reason: Fear of failure of the experiment. The father and prophet of Communism—Karl Marx—had warned that Communism could be realized in a highly industrialized country only, and Russia of 1917 was far from such a State. Lenin, therefore, undertook to use the power of his State to foment the social revolution in other countries. This failed. Hence insecurity at home and abroad, with accompanying terrorization of the population even before Lenin's passing.

A STRANGE PYRAMID OF TIME

Centuries of despotic rule in Russia had shaped the life of the youthful son of a school superintendent, Vladimir Ilyitch Ulyanov—the future Lenin. The success of the democracies gradually had been penetrating the wooden curtain of the autocratic Romanoff Empire. The lofty idealisms of the French Revolution, too, had their effect on the liberal minds of the period. The seeds of the liberation movement began to take firm root.

The infiltration into feudalistic Russia of the industrial revolution from the West raised the tempo of this movement. By the time Lenin was born in 1870, barely nine years after feudalism was abolished in Russia, revolutionary underground circles were rife among university students. Lenin's brother, Alexander, was executed for participating in a plot to assassinate the Tsar. This had a profound influence on the 17 year old Vladimir. He, too, joined the conspiratorial group at the Kazan University. Prompt expulsion followed.

On December 8, 1896, Lenin was arrested and confined to the "House of Preliminary Detention" in St. Petersburg (now Leningrad) until February 14, 1897. He was allowed to have visitors, receive newspapers and books, and even worked on his book, *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*. When released to proceed to Siberian exile at his own expense and without police guard, he remarked jokingly: "Too bad the release has come so soon. There is still much work to do on the book, and in Siberia it will be hard to get books."

None the worse for the three years in Siberia, he was well prepared to play his part in Russia's abortive 1905 revolution. By 1907 he was convinced that Russia was not ripe for his brand of revolution. He moved to western Europe and spent most of the succeeding ten years in Switzerland, Austria and England.

He returned to Russia in the spring of 1917, after the Tsar had been overthrown. He found the leaders of the many parties undecided and quarrelling among themselves. He knew his opportunity had come. With only 240,000 followers in a country of more than 170,000,000, he staged the social revolution of November 7, 1917.

“The revolution of 1917 on which Lenin rode into power,” declares Basil Mathews in *The Clash of World Forces*, “was not only at that time the most colossal that the world has ever seen ; but it is today, through the living forces that it has let loose on the world, shaking the nations of East and West as, perhaps, no other event in human history has done. For even the widest reverberations of the French Revolution did not move Asia ; they did not stir the slumbers of eighteenth-century China, or awaken passion in Delhi or Batavia.

“No other political and economic gospel in the world is making any challenge comparable with that of Bolshevism. Uncounted millions—Indian, Chinese and Javanese, Persian and Egyptian, with youth in every European and American land—are linked internationally in their response to the immortal challenge of Karl Marx: ‘The proletariat has nothing to lose but its chains. You have a world to win. Workers of the world, unite.’ And the reason why they unite is because Lenin, by his life-time of concentrated, passionate activity, translated Marx’s gospel into a Kingdom of Communism, the Empire of the Mass-man. Bolshevism is the greatest experiment ever made to fulfil the dream of bringing in a Golden Age for workers of every race—for the individual, the family and the village, the city, the nation ; for the world of commerce, finance and industry ; for morals and for art.”

And the strength of Lenin lay in the fact that he loathed and disbelieved in unhappiness ; and flung his whole being into the scales against it. Unhappiness was intolerable. Unhappiness was contrary to nature. Unhappiness was a cardinal sin. Human suffering and unhappiness called to him with a challenge from which he never shrank. Lenin was a militant optimist.

His friend, Maxim Gorky, wrote: “I have never met, nor do I know of, any man who hated and despised so deeply all unhappiness, grief, and suffering as Lenin. He was exceptionally great, in my opinion, precisely because of this feeling in him of irreconcilable, unquenchable hostility towards the suffering of humanity, his burning faith that suffering is not an essential and unavoidable part of

life, but an abomination which people ought to, and are able to, sweep away."

Caressing some children one day, he said to Gorky: "These will have happier lives than we. They will not experience much that we did. There will not be so much cruelty in their lives." Then, looking into the distance, to the hills where the village nestled, he added pensively: "And yet, I don't envy them. Our generation achieved something of amazing significance for history. The cruelty which the conditions of our lives made necessary will be understood and vindicated. Everything will be understood, everything."

Why should kindness and happiness spring from the obscene horror of civil war? We have it in our grasp to turn the common man's revolt against suffering and unhappiness into constructive channels. Lenin desired a world in which men should have an equal share of happiness, and he was supported by a rational philosophy. Lenin's tactics were successful because they appealed to a people who were hungry, disillusioned and angry, and who were ready to follow a determined leader who offered them an alternative to the chaos, misery and insecurity to which the old order had reduced them.

Karl Marx, who challenged the nineteenth century, challenged it not with the threat of force, but with an intellectual analysis which is often right, sometimes wrong, but always rational. His challenge was like a great thunderstorm; it altered the climate of thought and it is quite impossible for those who have followed him to think in the same terms as those who preceded him. Above all, Marx was a humanist in that he believed in the free use of human reason, and a humanitarian in that he was inspired by a real interest in human happiness.

Philip Guadella, in a Broadcast Talk, thus summarised Lenin's amazing life as a maker of history:

"It was an odd career. Fifty-four years of life, twenty years of exile, five years of power, make a strange pyramid of time. But if Napoleon once said grandiloquently, as his army was going into action against the Turks in Egypt, that from the Pyramids forty centuries were looking on, it is a good deal truer that a good many centuries will contemplate with interest the strange truncated monument of Lenin's life. His achievement was the unaided product of his mind and will. He thought harder than most men; he worked far longer at things of which nothing seemed to come;

he passed half his life in the darkness of exile or prison. But in the end he lifted his whole country forward towards the light."

(2) *The Three Revolutions*

THE social structure which Lenin left to Russia, a land populated by nearly 175,000,000 persons, inhabiting more than one-sixth of the surface of the globe, is based on the teaching of Karl Marx that human progress depends on the replacement of Capitalism by Communism.

Marx was a philosopher who wanted to change the world, a revolutionist who spent his most important working hours in scholarly pursuits, an intellectual who sacrificed his own and his family's well-being to his ideals. He swiftly developed from rebellious youth to full-fledged revolutionary, resolved to destroy existing society and bring about a "complete rebirth of mankind." "The philosophers hitherto," he wrote, "have only interpreted the world in various ways: the thing is, however, to change it."

Friedrich Engels, the son of a prosperous textile manufacturer with mills in Prussia's Barmen and in England's Manchester, was Marx's great friend and collaborator. Engel's revolutionary zeal had been spurred by the degradation of Barmen's industrial workers and by the harsh bigotry of his Calvinistic father. His indignation flamed white hot when he went to work at nineteen in the Ermen and Engels Manchester mill and saw the unimaginable filth and misery in which that city's factory workers and their families lived.

Marx believed that the private profit system carried within itself the seeds of its own destruction, by leading to periodic devastating crises of industrial stagnation and unemployment and to an ever-increasing concentration of more wealth in the hands of fewer people.

By the "arming of the whole proletariat with muskets, rifles, cannon and munitions", he advocated the revolutionary overthrow of the existing order and the substitution of a new society, dominated at first by the industrial working-class in which private ownership of the means of production would be abolished, and the insistence on the complete subordination of the individual to the requirements of the cause. Ultimately, this new society would become classless and would be guided by the theory: "From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs."

In explaining why capitalism contains the seeds of its own destruction, Marx began with the theory, inconclusively advanced by

Adam Smith and developed by David Ricardo, that labour is the source of all value. And he went on to develop his theory of surplus value, the keystone of his economic philosophy. According to this view, each worker spends only a fraction of his working hours in earning his wages. The rest of the day he works for nothing. From this unpaid labour come all profits, including those needed to pay interest and rent. Thus Marx arrived at his picture of society: a host of useless capitalists and landlords robbing the workers of the fruits of their labour. Every capitalist, he argued, necessarily tries to wring from his workers as much surplus value as he can; even if he is humane, his competitors force him to exploit. At first he may simply make his employees work longer hours. When the law forbids that, or the capitalist finds that it lessens efficiency, he may shorten hours but introduce the speed-up and stretch-out to make his workers work faster and harder.

The capitalist also buys more and more and better and better machinery. This increases each worker's productivity, partly as a vastly enlarged tool harnessed to the steam equivalent of many men's power, partly because it permits an increasing division of labour. Each worker is now set at one monotonous, repetitious, automaton-like task. As these tasks become simpler and more mechanical, the capitalist can replace men with cheaply paid women and children. And with increased productivity the capitalist system can cheapen the prices of the commodities required to keep workers and their progeny alive, and thus decrease wages.

What do these things mean for the worker? Marx's summation: "They mutilate the labourer into a fragment of a man, degrade him to the level of an appendage of a machine, destroy every remnant of charm in his work and turn it into a hated toil; they estrange from him the intellectual potentialities of the labour process in the same proportion as science is incorporated in it as an independent power; they distort the conditions under which he works, subject him during the labour process to a despotism the more hateful for its meanness; they transform his lifetime into working time, and drag his wife and child beneath the wheels of the Juggernaut of capital."

Machinery also produces technological unemployment. Overpopulation, says Marx, invariably follows in the path of capitalism. The capitalist accumulates more and more of the profits of his unpaid labour, he buys more and more machinery, machines do more and more of the work, fewer and fewer human hands are needed to tend them. Besides, capitalism needs a large unemployed

“industrial reserve army” for the times when it suddenly wants to hurl large amounts of its overflowing wealth into new industries, or into old ones whose markets have suddenly expanded.

Finally comes the worst of capitalism’s evils the periodic recurrence of ruinous depressions. Marx, though asserting that capitalism tends to give the working class less and less money to buy its products, flatly rejected the belief of labour leaders and other reformers that everything would be all right if employers would only pay their workers high enough wages to maintain a balance between production and consumption. Marx held that the prime cause of depression is absolute over-production, resulting from expanding capital’s insatiable urge to find a profit and the compulsion upon invested capital to keep producing, regardless of demand, in a desperate effort to maintain itself.

Marx predicted capitalism’s trend toward concentration and monopoly: “One capitalist,” he observed, “always kills many.” He predicted the virtual disappearance of the middle class, as one ruined capitalist after another dropped into the proletariat. He believed that the end would come when a handful of great capitalists at last confronted a proletarian multitude, disciplined and united by enforced association in great industries, driven to despair by prolonged depression. By that time, too, capitalism would have reached its highest development, as Marx believed it must; its centralization and productivity would be at a peak of ripeness for handy plucking by the proletariat.

To Marx it made no difference whether capitalists are good or bad: they are driven by forces they neither control nor understand. *Kapital’s* indictment of the inhumanity of the capitalist system remains, despite a century’s reforms, a challenge to the conscience of every believer in that system. Without opposing workers’ demands for reforms, Marx had nothing but scorn for the “economists, philanthropists, humanitarians, improvers of the condition of the working class, organizers of charity, members of societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals, temperance fanatics, hole-and-corner reformers of every imaginable kind” who seek to remedy capitalism’s ills and heal its wounds. To him they only oppose the inexorable dialectic, striving to shore up the old instead of welcoming the new. No matter how much the worker’s lot may be improved, there can be no final compromise: the class war must be fought to the end. The end must be “a revolutionary change in the whole structure of society,” or else “the common ruin of the contending classes.”

Marx set forth the path, in his address to the Communist League, in 1850: "It is our interest and our task to make the revolution permanent, until all the more or less possessing classes are driven from power, until the proletariat has conquered the State power, and . . . in all the dominant countries of the world has advanced so far that competition with the proletariat in these countries has ceased, and at least the decisive productive forces are concentrated in the hands of the proletarians.

"For us, it cannot be a question of changing private property but only of its destruction, not of glossing over class antagonisms but of abolishing classes, not of bettering the existing society but of founding a new one."

The Communist Manifesto laid out the goal: "The Communists . . . openly declare that their purpose can be achieved only by the forcible overthrow of the whole existing social order. . . . Proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Proletarians of all lands, unite!"

MARXISM KNOCKED SIDeways

Under the influence of Lenin, Marx's ideas hardened into the philosophy, into the fanatical faith, of the Bolshevik Party that emerged as the dominant power in Russia after the Revolution. Lenin, the unquestioned leader and founder of the Soviet State, was a thoroughgoing Marxist in his philosophical and economic outlook. But by his elaboration of Marx's teaching and by his emphasis on certain phases of Marx's thought, he gave a definite and distinctive character to Russian Bolshevism as distinguished from the international Socialism which held the field before the First World War.

Lenin also put forward the conception that capitalism had entered on its final stage of competitive imperialist systems, which would lead to international clashes, out of which would proceed in turn revolutions.

Another point that received a good deal of emphasis in his teaching was the impossibility of a gradual, peaceful transition from Capitalism to Communism, and the necessity for smashing the old State apparatus by violence and bloodshed, and building up another entirely new. "The suppression of the minority of exploiters by the majority of wage slaves of yesterday is a matter so easy, simple, and natural that it will call for less bloodshed than the suppression of the uprising of slaves, serfs, and wage labourers," says Lenin in *The State and Revolution*.

When Lenin seized power in Russia in November, 1917, his views on the nature of the State were unimpeachably Marxist. The State, being in its very essence an instrument for the oppression of one class by another, was therefore an evil which could have no place in the classless Communist society. In order to win the victory which should lead to the establishment of the classless society, the proletariat must seize the State machine and turn it against their old oppressors, the bourgeoisie. But the State would remain, in accordance with its essential nature, an instrument of class oppression; and it would be used, as such, by the triumphant proletariat to crush the bourgeoisie. This was, however, only a transitional period. The dictatorship of the proletariat was, wrote Lenin, "not an organization of war." Once the bourgeoisie had been extinguished or rendered impotent, the State would become a meaningless institution, since there would be nobody left to oppress, and would, in the classic formula of Marx and Engels, "wither away."

In 1917 this Utopian conception, taken over straight from Marx and Engels, was an integral part of Lenin's creed. There is no evidence that his faith in it was ever shaken, though in his last years he once admitted that the transitional period, before the State finally disappeared, might be "a whole historical epoch." And the odd thing is that this conception still figures in the official creed of the Soviet rulers today. It is one of the most curious of contemporary paradoxes that Stalin, who has constructed the most powerful and most arbitrary State machine yet known in history, is compelled from time to time, though more and more rarely nowadays, to affirm that his real aim is the abolition of the State.

The formula invented for the 1936 Party Congress does not lack ingenuity. "The highest possible development of the power of the State with the object of preparing the conditions for the dying out of the State" is now Stalin's declared policy. The highest possible development of the State is the practice, the dying out of the State is the theory; and what is the good of Dialectical Materialism if it cannot prove, should the need arise, that black means white and white black? The withering away of the State plays much the same role in Soviet dogma as the Second Advent in Christian theology. It occupies an essential place in every confession of faith. But since the days of the primitive Church this prospect has not been regarded as imminent or allowed to affect day-to-day practice.

Things in the Soviet Union have not gone quite as easily as anticipated. It has become of late increasingly difficult, even in

a country where the suppression of free thought is carried to the pitch of perfection, to disguise the fact that this "highest possible development of the power of the State" has knocked Marxism sideways. The State, it is true, retains the ownership and control of industrial production. But in this respect the Soviet State has only carried to its logical conclusion a development which has also made gigantic strides in many capitalist countries. If, as Engels acutely observed, the taking over of industries by the State is Communism, then Napoleon, who nationalised the tobacco industry in France, must be counted as one of the founders of Communism. In that sense, Stalin may be permitted to rank with Napoleon. In any other sense his claim to be regarded as a Communist requires careful scrutiny.

"The principle of Communism," we are authoritatively informed by the new Soviet Constitution approved in 1936 is, "From each according to his ability, to each according to his work." Between Communism, thus defined, and Capitalism there seems to be no more than a hair's breadth. After all, the capitalist only takes from the worker "according to his ability" and asks for nothing better than to pay him "according to his work."

It is hard not to believe that many thousands of "old Bolsheviks" perceive today that the system evolved by Stalin is something very different from the system for which the Bolsheviks fought in 1917, and that the present regime, instead of moving towards the promised land of a classless society with no privileges and with distribution "to each according to his needs," is working night and day to establish and maintain a system based on precisely contrary premises. Stalin, who may have an uneasy Marxist conscience, clearly suspects the existence of such a body of opinion; and thousands of unadvertised arrests, in addition to the notorious ones, have been made in the past years in the attempt to eradicate this source of disloyalty to the regime.

In a B.B.C. talk in July 1931, in the series entitled "Russia in the Melting Pot," Mr. H. G. Wells said: "The history of Russia since 1917 is not the history of one single progressive, constructive effort. Quite otherwise. There have been three distinct convulsive changes, three revolutions in method. Most revolutions consist in one body of men giving place to another while things go on much as before. But the revolutions in Russia since 1917 have been absolute changes in the spirit and method of living—while the body of men in control has remained practically the same.

“The first phase lasted from 1917 to 1921. That was a real attempt to bring Communism into being, to live on terms of equality and mutual service, “from each according to his ability and to each according to his need.” Trading for profit-speculation, as they called it, was punished by severe penalties up to and including death. Communist Russia, the First Revolutionary Russia, failed. It failed in the face of a bad harvest, civil war, and intense foreign antagonism, but, I think, would have failed anyhow.

“In 1921 Lenin proclaimed the New Economic Policy in the place of Communism. Private trading was to be permitted; foreign capital was to be allowed into the country on reasonable terms; the more capable and industrious peasants were to reap the profit of their better output.

“This inaugurated the Second Revolutionary Russia, which lasted for seven years. It was no longer a Communist system at all; it was a collectivist system; it was a State Socialism. One cannot say that failed. The standard of comfort rose; production increased; a sort of bleak prosperity crept back to Russia. There was a marked advance in public health and a marked increase in population. The class of traders and the class of prosperous peasants, the Kulaks, multiplied. Private fortunes began to accumulate. Russia seemed to be moving in a direction that would bring her to a state of affairs rather like that of America in 1820; smaller farmers growing into big ones, businessmen laying the foundations of fortunes, and so on. She would come round at last to join in and follow up our Capitalism—wherever our Capitalism was going. That was not at all what the Communists had set out to do. And our Western Governments, strangely enough, remained hostile to Russia throughout that period. They nagged her about the Tsarist debts, they made her trading difficult; our British Government chose this time for its celebrated Arcos raid, and so on.

“Then suddenly after 1927 Russia gave up its policy of concessions and half-measures and proclaimed the Five Year Plan and the independent reorganization of Russia on modern, scientific lines. Russia took to planning. The whole State was to become one great departmentalized business, a single rationalized system. It was to be made over to that. So we come to the Third Revolutionary Russia, which is neither Communism like the first, nor a blend of collectivism and restrained individualism like the second, but a State Capitalism. It is the extreme logical development of the modern idea of rationalization. In five years it is intended

to make over the vast territories of Russia and the lives of 170 million people into a rationalized system of which there will be one owner, one single capitalist—the State—and everyone else will be an employee or a pensioner or a prisoner of that supreme owner.”

(3) *Labour and Reward*

“THE word Communism,” says Henry Sidgwick, “should be restricted to those schemes for equalising distribution which discard or override the principle that a labourer’s remuneration should be proportioned to the value of his labour.” “From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs,” this is the fundamental principle of Communism. The claim of the worker is not based on the value of his work, but simply on the ground that he exists. The appeal is not economic, but sentimental or humanitarian. This being so, it is absurd to suppose that Communism exists in Russia. Communism in Russia is a mere facade, behind which a very formidable nationalist, militarist, totalitarian State, based not on Communism but on State-Capitalism, is being forged.

The Communism of Russia shows no indication of becoming a system of communal living and equal sharing. The whole emphasis of the great change which the revolution has brought about is placed on abolishing the possibility of permitting one man to employ others for the sake of making a profit. Its concern is not that everyone should receive the same wage but that the State should be the universal employer and general paymaster.

People believe that everybody in Soviet Russia gets the same income regardless of the work he does. Even among those who realize that incomes are graduated, few probably would guess the author of the following quotation: “The key to industrial efficiency is a wage-scale that reflects correctly the difference between skilled and unskilled work. Wages must be paid according to work done and not according to need.” The author is Stalin, and the quotation is from a speech he made in 1931, laying down the foundations of Russia’s economic policy.

Engels prophesied that, with the abolition of private property agriculture and industry would soar to such proportions that the wants of all men would easily be satisfied. Nothing of the sort happened in Soviet Russia, so that so far back as December, 1918,

the Labour Code instituted obligatory work for everybody and a norm for daily production.

Later on the Communist government introduced also the profit motive. "From top to bottom," writes Ambassador Davies in *Mission to Moscow*, "production is stimulated by premiums and extra wages for service above the 'norm.'"

The whole tendency of the Soviet Union now is not to diminish material inequality, but to increase it by insisting that the more skilled and industrious worker in any field should receive more than his fellows. Stalin devoted some of his sharpest denunciation at the last party congress to those Communists who practise favour, or condone *uravnilovka*, which is best translated as 'equalization' or 'levelling.' "*Uravnilovka* in the sphere of consumption and personal life, is reactionary, petty-bourgeois nonsense, worthy of some primitive sect of ascetics, but not of a Socialist society," said Stalin, and added that there will be no equalisation even in the final phase of Communist society.

All this is a far cry from the levelling tendencies of 1929 and 1930. Then the liquidation of private traders in the towns and Kulaks in the villages was interpreted by many rank-and-file Communists as the first step toward a society where everyone would eat approximately the same amount of food and would be clothed in much the same way. At that time village Communists tried to force peasants to organize full-blooded communes, all eating at the same table and even throwing such remnants of individual ownership as the family cow and chicken into the common pot. In the towns young Communists began to organize communes, where all put whatever wages they earned into a joint fund, and from which they received whatever was necessary for food and clothing.

Such tendencies in village and town are now severely repressed. The peasant keeps his own house and garden, his cow and pig and chickens. Anything smacking of equal wages for work of uneven quantity and quality is considered thoroughly reprehensible; and the old ambition of the Soviet trade unions, gradually to raise the more poorly paid workers to the level of the more highly paid, is 'Right Opportunism,' a strong term of opprobrium in the Soviet Union.

The central and most fundamental fact about contemporary Russia is that the country is in the throes of an industrial revolution comparable with that which transformed western Europe 100

years ago. As Five-Year Plan succeeded Five-Year Plan, the Soviet Union was transformed from an overwhelmingly agricultural country to one in which only half the population was engaged in agriculture. To collectivize agriculture it was necessary to wipe out the millions of small farms, which were the most characteristic feature of Russian life, and to consolidate them in large socialized units. Some of the poorest of the peasants favoured this process. The more successful opposed it. Many of the successful had been soldiers in the Red Army during the civil war. That did not save them. They were stigmatized by the name of Kulak. Their farms and possessions were confiscated. If they objected—and millions did—they were either shot or sent to forced labour in Siberia.

THE SOVIET EXECUTIVE'S PRIVILEGED POSITION

The Soviet worker possesses many advantages unknown in capitalist lands. He is guaranteed paid work. He is guaranteed leisure. He is freed from the curse of unemployment. His working hours are reduced to seven a day, and still further reduced to six if his work lies in mines or in dangerous trades. He is assured of holidays with pay. His wife can work if she desires it, and receives an equal wage with men for equal work. His children are cared for in creche and school. In case of accident he receives compensation, and in case of sickness financial assistance and medical help. Technical institutes and universities await his children free of charge, and in old age he retires on a generous pension.

It would, however, be misleading to accept altogether at its face value the official theory that the Soviet State is run for the benefit of the worker. Economic and social laws do not cease to operate even under a Marxist dispensation. The Russian industrial revolution has produced results recognisably similar to those of the Western industrial revolution a century ago. It has brought into power in Russia, as it did in the West, not the proletariat which provides the muscles and sinews of industrial production, but a new social stratum, appropriately defined as a "middle class," which supplies that production with brains and capital. Nor does it matter that in Russia the owner of the brains is a bureaucrat, and the owner of the capital the State itself. A bureaucrat is a human being, and a State, just like a limited liability company or a bank, is composed of human beings; these human beings have their economic needs and ambitions and create their social tradition.

The first instinct of the new Russian bureaucrat, the capitalist and the black-coated worker of the industrial revolution, is to achieve a standard of living which raises him above the proletarian rank and file. He wants better food and lodging, better clothes for his wife, better seats at the theatre, the possibility of choosing his own doctor and consulting him without having to stand for hours or days in a hospital queue, and a thousand other benefits and privileges which in Russia, as elsewhere, are the prerogatives of the comfortably off; and, having these privileges, he wants an efficient State machine, with an efficient army and police, to secure him in the possession of them. All these things the new Russian middle class, composed mainly of officials, engineers, managers, clerks, Red Army officers, and professional men of all kinds, is slowly but surely acquiring.

Why has the Russian executive been given this privileged position, which is the exact reverse of traditional Socialism? Probably because he works under extraordinary handicaps. In the first place, all these good things are his only so long as he holds his job. He may lose it at any moment if the output of his plant falls below the official plan. His every action and movement is supervised by the local Communist Party bosses and by a local representative of the government, any of whom can remove him overnight. Under such a system, industrial executives can hardly be expected to stick their necks out by trying new ideas. But the Russian industrialization programme would never have succeeded had managers played it safe. The only way to get industrialization going was through offering extremely rich prizes to those executives who had the courage to take great risks.

Much less spectacular, but perhaps more important in Russia's industrial structure, is the systematic use of wage and bonus incentives to reward efficiency among industrial workers. In all the larger war plants, workers are paid, "progressive piece rates." This method of wage payment, which would not be permitted by labour unions in other countries, provides that the wage rate per piece goes up as production per hour goes up.

Members of collective farms do not receive wages. They share in the income of the farm, which is distributed in proportion to the amount and quality of the labour each worker contributes. Standard of calculation is the work-day "unit"; the estimated labour required to perform an average day's labour, for example, ploughing three and three-quarter acres with a double-share horse plough. Lighter and less skilled work is estimated at less than a full unit for

a day's work, but never at less than a half unit. More difficult jobs, calling for special skill, are assessed higher ; a tractor driver's day counts as four to five units. Extra work at harvest time, or any time the daily norm is exceeded, adds to the co-operative member's account, and those who get bumper crops in the sections assigned to them pile up additional work-day units.

The result of all these incentives is that the average collective farmer receives credit for up to 600 days' work a year, and since all members of a family are shareholders, the number of work-day units earned by a family usually runs into four figures.

The value of a unit, in addition to cash, is about 10 pounds of grain products and six pounds of potatoes, plus meat, vegetables, dairy products and honey. At the end of each year, both co-operative farms and urban industries operating on the piece-work system distribute at least a quarter of their cash profits to members, again on the work-unit basis. In addition, each family has the right to cultivate for private use an acre or two of land, and may supplement its income by raising livestock or bees.

This does not nearly complete the picture of the "material condition" of Soviet citizens. Part of the profits of both state-owned enterprises and co-operatives is used to expand the national economy by building new mills, factories, power plants, and railways. But a large proportion of it is "ploughed back" into the social welfare of the people themselves.

Noticeably absent is unemployment insurance, since there is a job for everyone able to work. But here are some of the social securities to which Soviet citizens are entitled as a national right.

Elementary and vocational education are free, and pupils in trade and factory apprenticeship schools are fed, clothed, and, if necessary, lodged, at State expense. Most academic and technical students receive monthly grants ranging from 150 to 500 roubles. Libraries, clubs, sports grounds, rural movies, and other recreational facilities are, with rare exceptions, free. Regular concerts, plays, movies, and lectures are given free of charge in most places of employment. The facilities of health resorts, sanatoriums, and rest-homes can be obtained at very low prices.

Medical service, including hospitalization and doctor's care, is free, and the cost of drugs and medicines is nominal. Also, during illness every employee receives an allowance of from 50 to 100 per cent of his previous earnings, for as long as he is unable to work. Women are entitled to a similar allowance for 35 days before and

42 days after childbirth. Mothers get 120 roubles for each child's layette.

On the birth of the third child, a grant of 400 roubles is made ; 1300 for the fourth ; and 1700 for the fifth. Mothers of ten children receive 5000 roubles on the birth of every succeeding child, and mothers of large families receive a monthly allowance for each child from the age of one to five, ranging from 80 to 300 roubles. These allowances are paid irrespective of the family's means.

Unmarried mothers receive 100 roubles a month for one child, 150 for two, and 200 for three, until the children are 12 years old. The unmarried mother may, if she prefers, place the child or children in a State-maintained home.

When a Soviet citizen dies, pensions are paid to his dependents under 16, and dependents unable to work are pensioned for life. There are also invalid pensions, and old age pensions for workers who have had a certain length of service. Special pensions are paid to persons who have rendered outstanding service to the State, to scientists with records of 25 years of scientific work, to super-annuated officers of the armed forces, to disabled soldiers, and to the dependents of dead servicemen. An additional source of income to Soviet citizens is interest on savings-deposits and loans to the government.

What can the worker do with his capital ? He can buy or build a house, and even rent it to others. His "private enterprise" can take the form of a private farm, or an artisan or handicraft business of his own, so long as it is run only by his own labour and that of his family. He cannot profit by the labour of others, buy for re-sale, nor lend money at usury.

But he does not have to exploit others to provide for himself. He knows that as long as he is able to work he can always earn his livelihood, and if he loses the ability to work the Soviet State and Soviet society will look after him and his family.

(4) *Communism or Socialism ?*

THE ideal of Communism is a very high one ; indeed too high ; a classless society, all members of which will work for their living, contributing as much as they can to the common stock and receiving in return the requisites of the good life ; "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs."

Who is the judge of "needs" does not appear. However, such a method can be practised only when the mass of mankind are

perfectly honest and selfless, both in working as well as they can, and in making demands on the common stock. The time for that is clearly a long way ahead. There is no present necessity to be precise as to its working.

When the Buddha laid down the principle of : " to each according to his needs," for the guidance of his disciples, he defined the " needs " of his bhikkhus down to the needle, and even then the Law has altogether failed. Who is the bhikkhu today who is satisfied with only the " eight requisites " allowed to him in the *Vinaya* laws ? Stalin once denounced " equalization " as " reactionary petty-bourgeois nonsense, worthy of some primitive sect of ascetics. " It might hearten the Soviet Dictator to learn that even ascetics consider equalization as impracticable.

Modern Communist theory is much more modest in its statement regarding equality. " The real content of the proletarian demand for equality is the demand for the abolition of classes. Any demand for equality which goes beyond that, of necessity passes into absurdity. " So wrote Engels, and the passage was considerably amplified by Lenin. Communism now looks forward only to a society in which each citizen works according to his ability and receives, not according to his " needs ", but according to his " deeds. "

Payment for work in Soviet State enterprises is based on the Socialist principle: " From each according to his ability, to each according to his work. " This means that the wages of each worker correspond to the quantity and quality of his work. The more productive his work is, and the more skilled, the greater is the payment for it. Stalin himself said: " There are two theories ; one, to every man according to his needs ; that is Communism ; the other, to every man according to the value of his work ; that is Socialism. We have chosen the second. "

What is in force in Russia now is not Communism but State Capitalism, in which people draw from the funds of the community the value of the work they do for the community, instead of being forced to sell their labour to private employers for a subsistence wage. For a short time a form of Communism was tried in Russia. It was a pitiful failure. Its failure proved that men could not be trusted to do their best without having their reward reckoned in terms of what they had actually done. All endeavour to conduct the Russian experiment on Communist lines was therefore abandoned.

Lenin had a great dream, but an impossible one. He had hitched his political and economic waggon to one of the most distant stars in the economic constellation—Communism.

His Utopia was to be a state of society where each citizen would contribute according to his ability and draw from the common pot according to his needs. That calls for a society where people are totally devoid of envy, jealousy and hatred; where the man with the largest contributions to society would not begrudge the least contributor even if the latter chose to help himself to ten times as much of the goods and services as the former.

Lenin also had failed to realize that the leaders of his dream-State would have to be Arahats, in the saint class. The world—and the Russian people—have learned from bitter experience that the time to look for saintly leaders is very far off.

In October 1917, after the news came that Kerensky's government had fallen, Lenin, who had been in hiding, appeared at a meeting of the Workers and Soldiers' Soviet of Petrograd. He mounted the rostrum and, when the long, wild, happy shouts of greeting had died down, remarked: "We will now proceed to the construction of a Communist State."

He said this as simply as though he were proposing to put up a new cattle-shed. But in all his life he had never asked himself the equally simple question: "How is this newfangled contraption going to fit in with the instinctive tendencies of the animals which were going to live in it?"

Fortunately, Lenin was a great man who could show his greatness by admitting mistakes when he had made them. Since no one can avoid making mistakes, the frank avowal and abandonment of them is perhaps the highest form of magnanimity known amongst men. Lenin saw that the human race was not yet educated up to putting forth their utmost efforts without the stimulus being proportioned to the value of work done. He saw that, while Communism might be a noble, generous ideal—"a spiritual movement based on the deepest moral motives," as the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* describes it—it was an ideal which could be realized only when the nature of Man has been raised to a higher level.

Marx adumbrated his theories by observing the state of England in the middle of the last century. The materialism which is the corner-stone of Marxism was then rampant in all classes. Although the squalor and wretchedness of the poor, specially in

London, was worse in the eighteenth century than in the nineteenth, it is not denied that there was in nineteenth-century England enough to cause indignation in the mind of any social reformer.

From the standards acted upon by business men in those days, Marx evolved a philosophy of history—the economic interpretation of history: “The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles,” he said. From that time to this, historians have sought to find economic causes for the rise and fall of nations, for wars of conquest and expansion, and for all important mass movements. Idealism as a motive of action is ruled out.

“The weak point of this theory”, says Dean Inge, “is that all through history the economic motive, if it existed, seems to have been unconscious. The Romans may possibly have destroyed Carthage and Corinth as commercial rivals, but I doubt it. The three motives which in all ages seem to have stimulated masses of men to act together have been Liberty, National Glory or Patriotism and Religion.

“The Swiss and the Dutch and many other peoples gave their lives to preserve their national independence. The wars of Louis XIV, and Napoleon were fought for *la gloire*—a name for territorial aggression. These motives, all idealistic, not material, have in fact determined the course of history. The ‘economic man’ is a monster; he never existed. The class-hatred which Marx regarded as the fundamental fact in modern society has been sporadic and never very deep-seated....

“The Bolsheviks, in adopting materialism as their creed, have made a fundamental mistake. They have destroyed liberty, supposing that nobody wants it. They have abolished the name of Russia, the symbol of so many national glories and ambitions. They have tried to destroy religion, assuming that all sensible people are agreed that religion is only the ‘opium for the people.’

“And in the place of all these idealisms they have placed only a God-state, a vast machine in which every man and woman is only an insignificant and negligible cog. The ideal, if it is an ideal, seems to be a polity, like that of the social insects.”

A careful examination of Marx in *Kapital* shows how this saturnine revolutionary, burning with hatred against society, worked out a complete technique of revolution. Lenin and Trotsky adopted it entire, only throwing off all remains of the camouflage that the revolution had any sympathy with democracy or liberty.

Though the technique of insurrection, as worked out by Marx, was, in actual practice, found to be of deadly efficiency, and his prediction that "the private profit system carried within itself the seeds of its own destruction, by leading to periodic devastating crises of industrial stagnation and unemployment" has been fulfilled to the letter, his philosophy has been found to be too idealistic, and his economics to be too antiquated. The world we live in today, with Universal Adult Suffrage, Income Tax, Surtax, Profit Tax and Death Duties, Trade Unions, Minimum Wages, Social and Unemployment Insurance and other labour welfare legislation, Free Education, Free Medical Services etc. is not the world in which Karl Marx lived a century ago.

Marx and the other originators, who made Communism a classic doctrine in the history of economic theory, were idealists, insufficiently equipped either with natural or human history for an evolutionary understanding of present-day facts. They lived in a time when the Economic Obsession was running through the Western world like an epidemic, as indeed it still runs to this day. They caught the infection of that spiritual plague, without knowing where it came from. But it was a gift from the enemy; from the wage-paying, serf-holding, eighteenth century factory owner, whose successors they set out to destroy.

Marx's real greatness lies in his historical analysis, but he was not a practical man. His acute social analysis was limited to the past, which he could safely interpret since he already knew the answer. When he turned to the future he was lost. In particular, he never faced the most important problem in any revolution—the problem of power. Whenever he approached that crucial question he muffled his thought in Nordic verbiage and meaningless generalizations about a "Classless Millennium" and the "Withering away of the State." Even if the Marxist analysis were true, modern Russian Communism would not necessarily follow from it. Marx simply had no conception of the future whose prophet he is alleged to have been.

HEGEL'S INFLUENCE ON MARX

Hegel's theory of the dialectical method of thought is claimed as the immediate background of Marx's philosophy. "Without Hegel," wrote Lenin, "Marx's *Kapital* is unintelligible." It will, therefore, be as well to know who was Hegel and what were the ideas of the man whose philosophy formed the starting point of

the Marxian teachings. Hegel was born of middle-class parents at Stuttgart, in Germany, in 1770. He studied philosophy, and in the course of his life he held a number of professorships. He died in 1831. After his death, his works and lectures were published by a group of his students, "friends of the immortalized one."

Hegel believed that Absolute Idea or Absolute Spirit is the only reality and indeed the whole of reality. It is only the Idea or the Spirit which truly exists. "Reason is the sovereign of the world." Hegel, like the Buddha, was reluctant to use the word "God" for an impersonal principle. So, as the counterpart of the Buddha's *Amata*, we have Absolute Idea or Absolute Spirit, in the Hegelian philosophy. Hegel's Absolute is not "the night in which all cows are black," but "the eternal and fully realized Idea, which is eternally active, and eternally produces and enjoys itself as Absolute Spirit."

Hegel's Absolute, like the Buddha's *Amata*, differs from the Christian God because its omnipotence is impersonal and operates through law, which makes no distinction between the baptized and the unbaptized, and is not swayed by appeals for a rainless day for a picnic or by personal petitions sent by people on opposite sides, so that it will give victory to their armies.

Hegel's Absolute Idea achieves self-knowledge by the principle of Dialectics. He took this word from the Greeks, for whom Dialectics was a process of arriving at truth by debate. Hegel owes his influence to his re-emphasis of old truths, and in particular to his insistence on the value of discussion and dialectics.

This system of logic has not inaptly been described, like the Buddha's philosophy, as "the philosophy of Becoming" or "the philosophy of constant flux and variation." This is, in fact, the meaning of the term "dialectical" as applied to Hegel's logic; for, as in a dialectical disputation, argument is opposed to argument, and from the clash of opposites a new attitude of the mind or intellectual position arises; so also, according to Hegel's dialectic, the progress of ideas (thought) is accomplished by means of contradictions, till ultimately the highest and richest expression is reached and expressed in an Absolute Idea which enshrines all truth and reality.

Marx called his theory historical materialism. It was the application to history of what Engels called "Dialectical Materialism." From Hegel the team borrowed the notion that everything in the world is in constant flux; something new is always developing, something old is dying away. And sooner or later all this

change is for the better. Progress is achieved by what Hegel called the dialectic: one force (*thesis*) is opposed by a second (*antithesis*), which has split off from it, and from their conflict emerges a *synthesis* containing the best elements of both. Thus the Brahminical dispensation of caste, for example, might be called the thesis; the Buddha's revolt against the Brahminical yoke the antithesis; the Buddha's doctrine of the brotherhood of man the synthesis.

Hegel, however, believed that this progress represented the working out of an Absolute Idea in the universe, a World Spirit expressing itself through human consciousness. Marx adapted this philosophical idealism to produce his materialistic interpretation of history. He held that the thought and activity of any society—its laws, politics, religion, morals, etc.—arise primarily from the material conditions of its life, principally its modes of production and exchange. "It is not human consciousness that determines life," says Marx, "but, conversely, it is social life that determines consciousness." In other words, men do not operate their economy according to their ideas of truth and justice, but derive their ideas of truth and justice largely from the nature of their economy.

From this premise it might be inferred that society must remain forever static. On the contrary, according to the Marxian dialectic, modes of production and exchange constantly shift with the discovery of new techniques and tools and resources. In time, men develop new ideas of truth and justice to fit their new circumstances, and inevitably those who suffer by the change revolt against the existing social order. "The history of all existing society," affirmed the team in *The Communist Manifesto*, "is the history of class struggles. Free-man and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in sharp opposition each to the other. They carried on perpetual warfare."

Hegel believed that human progress had reached its apex in the Prussian State of Friedrich Wilhelm III. Marx held out for one more step. "Modern bourgeois society, rising from the ruins of feudal society," proclaimed the *Manifesto*, "did not make an end of class antagonism. It merely set up new classes in place of the old; new conditions of oppression, new embodiments of struggle. Our own age, the bourgeois age, is distinguished by this; that it has simplified class antagonisms. More and more society is splitting into two great hostile camps, into two great and directly contraposed classes: Bourgeoisie and Proletariat."

In *Kapital*, Marx set out to show how capitalism (thesis) must inevitably, by its own inner laws, become so increasingly intolerable to the proletariat as to produce revolt against the bourgeoisie (antithesis) and a classless society (synthesis). Marx said very little about what the classless society would be like. He did not even find it necessary to assume that the revolution would wash away all human vice. For him it was enough that: (a) most of the world's troubles have sprung from the exploitation of class by class; (b) the ascendancy of the working class would abolish classes by making every man a producer; (c) abolition of private property in the means of production would mean that nobody would have anything to exploit anybody with.

Marx predicted that after the revolution, while Communism was emerging from the womb of capitalism in a "long and painful travail," there would be a "political transition period" requiring a "revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat" and considerable inequality of living conditions. But after sufficient education and organization, the no-longer-needed State would "wither away," everyone would live in peace and plenty in a society devoted to "the full and free development of every individual," under the slogan: "From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs!"

INNER CHANGE AN ESSENTIAL NEED

Marx has faith in the inevitability of progress. The movement of society is a forward one. Each successive stage represents development, is nearer the rational ideal than its predecessors, the rational ideal being the free community in which there will be neither master nor slave, neither rich nor poor, in which the world's goods, produced in accordance with the social demand unhampered by the greed and caprice of individuals, are distributed rationally.

This vision, then, of a Utopian social order, where in a classless society the struggle for individual economic gain disappears, is the fitting finale of human endeavour. Marx, like all the greatest thinkers of the world, believed in the essential goodness of human nature, and that, when conditions allowed man to grow to his full stature, he was then verily a god. In such an ideal State as the Marxian Arahath-world he would spontaneously be rid of self-hood, ill-will, illusion and fear. Economic man, whose vices are evidently the result of his environment, would presumably give place to moral man.

This is in harmony with the views of scientists like T. H. Huxley and Sir Arthur Keith, and philosophers like Herbert Spencer, who declare that virtue and vice are circumstantial, not inherent in human nature. Huxley said that man's mentality is dual—that is, at one moment he acted cosmically or in the manner best fitted for survival in the struggle for existence, and at another moment he acted ethically or in sympathy and friendship for his fellow-beings. Spencer employing different terms, named one the Code of Enmity, and the other of Amity. A life of constant external enmity and economic and social antagonism generated a code of hatred, greed and revenge. Once the adverse external conditions are removed, the Code of Enmity or the "cosmic process" will wither away and die out in the set course of nature, and unregenerate man will change into the ideal 'non-attached' man.

The Buddha, too, conceived of human nature in similar terms. With Him also the perfected man was the non-attached man, the Arahat who had no occasion to crave, to hate, to fear or to be deluded about the true nature of things. But the Buddha perceived that the development of man to perfection would not be achieved in the manner indicated by Marx and the other European thinkers; that is, by change in environment. He clearly saw that an inner change was the essential need. This inner change is from ignorance to knowledge: it meant the freeing of men's minds from the shackles of delusion. And this drastic and complete change of heart and mind could never be effected only by the removal of adverse external material conditions.

The Buddha saw that delusion—the attaching of false values to things—was the cause of all evil and suffering. "The ignorant man," He says in the *Majjhima Nikaya*, "perceives earth; and so perceiving, considers earth, deliberates and reflects upon earth, and thinking, 'Mine is earth,' takes delight in earth; and why? Even because he does not truly know it." And as with earth, so with all else. That, it would seem, is an apt description of economic man. The final release lay in emancipation through knowledge and liquidation of one's possessiveness.

Buddhism means brotherhood and non-attachment. It means a non-selfish approach to economics. It means realization that humanity is one great unity. In the end it must lead to the pooling of resources on a basis of the true needs and true potentialities of the various national consumers and producers.

So long as there exists possessiveness in Russia the Communist State as envisaged by Marx and Lenin cannot become real. To

take possessions away from the landlord and the Kulak will not create a Communist State. Only elimination of possessiveness, complete non-attachment, can do it.

“ Buddha is not content with taking away a man's property and giving it to another. That is patchwork, like social service,” writes bhikkhu Dhammapala. “Buddhism takes away from people their instinct of possessiveness and gives, to those who do not have it, a deeper understanding wherewith to grasp the meaning of life. Then, for the sake of joy, people will have joy in pleasure itself instead of being satisfied with having the means thereto, which naturally leads to hoarding, banking, exploiting and all other out-growths of private property. To bring about absolute equality will require a fundamental change in man's mental attitude ; and it is here that Buddhist Psychology can compete with Communistic Sociology. A dialectic process can only be brought to an end by the solution of the cause of the conflict. The dialectic of greed and hate (*lobha-dosa*), which are both rooted in delusion (*moha*), can only be solved by understanding and insight. The dialectic, finally, which history shows during the course of the ages, the conflict between classes, cannot come to an end by dictatorial power, but only in a classless society. This is the path marked out for humanity, whereby all conflict, which is based on the distinction between self and others, will come to an end by the solution of the two extremes which are in ignorance opposing one another. It is in the impersonal element of a process that all components become dissolved in perfect harmony.”

That Marx should have been fascinated by Hegel's dialectical method is perfectly intelligible. The development of movement or motion along the principle of contradiction, or the conflict of opposites and the inevitable final synthesis, which Hegel elaborated and applied with equal rigidity to the movement of thought, Nature and the world, appeared to Marx, who was immersed in the changing social condition of the nineteenth century Industrial Revolution, as a striking confirmation of the reality before his eyes. The path to progress was evidently the path of conflict, and only through revolution could mankind realize itself.

“ Dialectical Materialism,” says Leuke in his *Gautama the Buddha and Karl Marx*, “permits the use of force in the restricted circumstances of social necessity. This viewpoint seems incompatible with Buddhism, for the Buddha Dhamma cannot condone the use of force in any circumstances, whether it involves the taking

of life or a lesser degree of force. For the one criterion of ethics, according to Buddhism, is Maitriya or compassion for each and every sentient being."

The call of Communism to the world has the passion of religion. It challenges existing evils, offers a clear and definite programme of action, and professes to provide a scientific analysis of economic and political situations. In its concern for the poor and the lowly, in its demand for a more equitable distribution of wealth and opportunity, in its insistence on racial equality, it gives us a social message with which all idealists are in agreement. But our sympathy for the social programme does not necessarily commit us to the Marxist creed of violence as the method by which the workers are to attain to power.

As Aldous Huxley has pointed out, a desirable end does not justify evil means: if the means are sufficiently evil they will adulterate the end. Those who deny that there is any standard of right which they must strive to observe, whatever the provocation, will eventually poison the results which they are attempting to achieve. The kind of classless society which the adherents of such a relativist philosophy would produce would be a less stable and a more unpleasant society than any feudal or capitalist order. In the last resort what makes human personality deserving of a Communist or Socialist civilization is that it is capable of placing certain values above all other considerations, above even its own convenience and security.

The great riddle of Karl Marx's personality will probably always be in dispute: how much was he driven to his extraordinary life and work by love of humanity and how much by hatred of capitalist society. "Working for the world" was one of Marx's favourite sayings, and occasionally he mentioned the service or the sufferings of humanity in his writings. But for every word of such explicit humanitarianism, there are a thousand of hatred and appeals to hatred. He asserted that the power of love had failed to better social conditions in the eighteen hundred years since Christ, and that the "iron necessity" that drives the proletariat to destroy capitalism and capitalists "will open the way to socialist reforms by transformation of existing economic relations sooner than all the love that glows in all the feeling hearts of the world." He argued that what the proletariat needed was not Christian "self-abasement, resignation, submission, and humility" but "courage, confidence, pride and independence, even more than it needs daily bread."

Marx taught his followers to harness for their ends the energy of class hatred wherever it existed, and they have followed him faithfully: "How can people who talk of nothing but destruction and bloodshed lead humanity to freedom and happiness?" asked Firelei, the fiancée of Jan Valtin, the German Communist leader.

"You must understand that we are at war," answered Valtin. "The purpose of war is to annihilate the enemy. We must destroy before we can build anew."

"But why must we borrow the methods from Russia? Everything you do is aimed at violence. I don't like violence."

"Every birth is like a revolution—violent. Even the most gentle child enters life amid screams and blood."

"I have so much to learn," Firelei said.

"You must learn how to hate," Valtin told her.

"I wish we could go away and live our own lives," replied Firelei. (*Out of the Night*).

Have we not strayed far from the Buddha's path?: "Our mind shall not waver, no vile speech will we utter; we will abide tender and compassionate, loving in heart, void of secret malice; and we will be ever suffusing such a one with the rays of our loving thought, and from his forthgoing we will be ever suffusing the whole world with thought of love far-reaching, grown great and beyond measure, void of ill-will and bitterness."

In opposition to Marxian Communism, with its emphasis on the revolutionary method, there is that of evolutionary Socialism, which rules out the necessity of bloodshed in social changes. Mankind has had so much experience of violence, that in its pursuit of the goal of self-realization it instinctively abhors the path of conflict.

What the average man hates about Marxism is, not so much its theory or its system, as the fiendish cruelty of the revolution which inaugurated that regime. A large number of us are admirers of Russia, and, so far as we can see, we in Ceylon have a lot to learn from her. But their achievement has been made possible at an immense cost in human suffering. Wretched though the Ceylon peasant may be, we should hesitate to inflict on him, even for the sake of some certain future gain, all that the Russian peasant has been through.

Nevertheless, we must see the greatness of an idea divorced from the human imperfections of its exponents, or the idealistic aims behind a movement, apart from the violent passions of its followers.

With all its difficulties and shortcomings, with all the opposition, military or commercial, of the outside world, Soviet Communism has raised a terribly backward Asian State, in some 25 years, to a State of world importance, of great industrial strength, and, above all, of a standard of living which, starting somewhere about the level of the more depressed peoples of Asia, has already overtaken that of many races of Europe, and will soon claim comparison with that of the most favoured of Western industrial peoples.

The Soviet experiment is, in some ways, the most gigantic and heroic ever tried in human history. Some of its underlying ideas are going to transform the whole world. The final solution of the problem, we believe, will be neither Communism nor Capitalism, but something midway between the two, represented by that new social and economic order known as Socialism.

The essence of Socialism is the substitution of public ownership for private ownership, on a scale wide enough not only to transform the economic structure, but also to render ineffectual the greed for personal profit and economic power upon which the capitalistic system inherently rests. The pendulum of Russian Communism also will eventually swing back and finally rest on this new order which is Democratic Socialism.

Chapter II

NATIONALISM AND PATRIOTISM

“ What are the elements which constitute a distinct nation ? It is a question that has often been debated.

“ There is racial identity. There is common history and tradition. There is geographical situation, government. Most distinctive of all—there is a separate language. But no country on earth can claim a hundred per cent of marks under each of these tests.

“ I remember a debate in the House of Commons, when the claim of Ireland to be a nation was being challenged by Lord Hugh Cecil because of its failure to answer all these conditions. Tim Healy rose and answered : ‘ The Hon. Member for Greenwich denies that we are a nation ’ and asks : ‘ What is nationality ? Nationality is something for which a man is prepared to die. The noble Lord would not die for the meridian of Greenwich. ’

“ His answer was not only witty but conclusive.

“ Nationality is a profounder thing than you can measure by the application of pedantic rules. One of the most intensely patriotic countries in the world—Switzerland—does not possess racial unity or a common language. German Nazism is wise in choosing the broad test of Aryanism as the sole criterion of German origin. On no narrower basis could they claim racial unity.

“ It is sometimes said today that the world is suffering from an excess of nationalism. That is not true. The world is suffering from a perversion of nationalism.

“ The zeal and pride that seek to lift a nation above the wretched, ignorant, squalid past to heights where its people shall be enlightened, prosperous, enjoying a physical, mental and moral well-being with a quality and distinction that enables them to look every other nation in the face, unashamed ; that is a nationalism which is a blessing to those who practise it ; an example and incentive to emulation for those others who witness its beneficent activities ; an enrichment to the sum total of human achievement and happiness.”

—DAVID LLOYD GEORGE, Prime Minister of England during the First World War, in an article entitled “ Nationalism Is Not Evil.”

“ What does a deviation towards nationalism mean—irrespective of whether it is a deviation towards Great-Russian nationalism or towards local nationalism ? The deviation towards nationalism is the adaptation of the internationalist policy of the working class to the nationalist policy of the bourgeois. The deviation towards nationalism reflects the attempts of ‘ one’s own ’ ‘ national ’ bourgeoisie to undermine the Soviet system and to restore capitalism. The source of these deviations is, as you see, a common one. It is a *departure* from Leninist internationalism. If you want to keep both these deviations under fire, then aim primarily against this source, against those who depart from internationalism—irrespective of whether the deviation is towards local nationalism or towards Great-Russian nationalism.”

—STALIN

(1) *Whither Sinhalese Nationalism ?*

WHAT is a nation

It is not easy to define the term precisely. About all that one can say is that any fairly large group of people living in a particular country that regards itself as a nation is one. Such a group is more likely to regard itself as a nation if it has a common language, a common racial origin, common ideas about morality and religion, and a government of its own choosing. In *Marxism and the National Question*, Stalin defines a nation as "a definite community of people with a common language ; a common territory ; a common economic life ; economic cohesion ; and a common psychological make-up, which manifests itself in a common culture."

It must be emphasized that none of the above characteristics is by itself sufficient to define a nation. On the other hand, the absence of a single one of them, although not conclusive against a particular community's claim to nationhood, would certainly constitute a strong argument against that claim.

It goes without saying that a nation, like every other historical phenomenon, is subject to the law of change, has its history, its beginning and end.

Nations differ not only in their conditions of life, but also in their ideologies, which manifest themselves in peculiarities of national culture. If England, America and Ireland, which speak one language, nevertheless constitute three distinct nations, it is in no small measure due to the peculiar ideological structure which they developed from generation to generation as a result of dissimilar conditions of existence.

By itself, an ideological set-up, or as it is otherwise called, "national character," is something indefinable to the observer, but in so far as it manifests itself in a distinctive culture common to the nation, it is definable and cannot be ignored. National character consists of certain common attitudes and traits produced by life in a common territory, subject to the same influences of nature and, to an important although lesser degree, to the same influences of history and legal systems.

Nationalities are created out of ethnographic and political elements when nationalism breathes life into the form built by preceding centuries. Thus nationalism and nationality are closely interrelated.

As with man, so with a nation or a race. Its life-span has a beginning, a middle and an end. When the Sinhalese nation came into being, with the blessings of the Buddha, twenty-five centuries ago, it was a destined event of high import and purpose. The chosen race was allotted a life-span of fifty centuries to fulfil its great destiny. It will thus be noted that we are today on the threshold of a glorious era in the history of our race.

When the Sinhalese, united by bonds of blood and religion, and inspired by the burning desire to live a free life and develop their own culture, formed a new element in the political arena of Ceylon, the Britisher made a mistake for which he at least has the excuse that some minorities who should have known better shared it. They thought that the essence of the whole movement was merely a desire for power and domination, whereas it was the love of creation, the innate ineradicable desire to build up something in one's own image. Just as in the spring-time of life the same message bursts from the unconscious to the conscious self and becomes objective, so to the Sinhalese there had come a reawakening, a desire to create a State which should be Sinhalese, reared up by Sinhalese hands, and breathing a Sinhalese atmosphere in the land of Sinhalese tradition.

A liberating nationalism is without doubt the highest form of patriotism—the only patriotism worthy of the name, worth fighting for or dying for. And some of the finest men and women who have ever lived have fought for it and died for it, and so long as tyranny and injustice exist in the world, it will continue to command the religious fervour and self-sacrifice of such men and women. The last wish (*prārthanā*), of Keppetipola Disava, uttered in the temple of the Sacred Tooth where he was taken for worship, before being led to be beheaded for his part in the Uva Rebellion, speaks the voice of that patriotism which is the pure flame of an impassioned and selfless idealism. He said: "May I be reborn in Lanka to continue the struggle for freedom!"

Those who denounce nationalism as an evil, seldom, if ever, differentiate between imperialist nationalism, and the struggle for freedom of the victims of imperialism. Nor is the injustice and oppression of imperialism any less for the subject race concerned if perpetrated by a so-called democracy. To confuse the ideals of freedom of subject peoples with the power-lust and mercenariness of imperialism, is to confuse a people's struggle for freedom with statesmen's struggles for the most corrupt form of power.

minorities are setting their might against us to prevent the attainment of this high ideal. They think, he declared, "the Sinhalese are fighting for self-aggrandisement and power, but we can positively declare that the triumphs we achieve will be triumphs for the whole of this country." Here both Mr. Senanayake and Mr. Amarasuriya combined, as Bonn and Lloyd George did, to give us a faithful picture of Sinhalese Nationalism in our time, what it stands for, and what it seeks to achieve.

For four and a half centuries alien domination had repressed the Sinhalese and thwarted their national aspirations. This age-long frustration is nearing its end, the 'lid is about to fly off the pot,' and the Sinhalese are now throbbing with that love of creative impulse—the impulse, peculiar to human beings, to exercise brain and hands on the environment, shaping and altering it in accordance with an ideal conceived in the mind. Frustration of this impulse, particularly by another nation, produces a deep and lasting effect upon the emotions which finds expression in an insatiable appetite for everything national and a revulsion against everything alien.

The hope of Mother Lanka for the future is like the hope a mother holds in her heart as she sits by the bed of a sick child: "If this child gets well, O god, what will I not do to make his life beautiful and worthy—if only he gets well." Substitute "freedom" for "well," and you lay bare the heart of Mother Lanka.

"For the first time in the history of humanity," as Dr. Alexis Carrel points out so beautifully in his book, *Man the Unknown*, "a crumbling civilization is capable of discerning the causes of its decay. For the first time, it has, at its disposal, the gigantic strength of science. Will we utilize the knowledge and this power? It is our only hope of escaping the fate common to all great civilizations of the past." But, as Dr. Carrel suggests throughout his book, the strength of science is not alone what is needed for any civilization, nay, our own civilization.

The mother who prays by the bedside of her sick child knows this. It is not merely the instinct of bribery that brings her to her knees with the words: "If this child gets well, what will I not do to make his life beautiful and worthy." In that hour of suffering she has had a vision. She has seen what the child might be.

The "vision" that we saw in that "hour of suffering," when a Sinhalese child was "trying in vain to obtain nourishment from the breast of her dead mother," was what that child was meant to be. We all of us had forgotten that, but the great Mahanāma,

the composer of the immortal *Mahavamsa*, did not, when he started his "Story of the Sinhalese" with these death-bed words of the Master:

" In Lanka, O Lord of gods,
Will My doctrine be established,
Do thou therefore guard well
Him, and his followers and Lanka."

Lanka has a message for the whole world. Her treasures of spiritual wisdom, cherished during two thousand years and more, are for the healing of nations. Many are struck with amazement that a nation so great, spiritually, morally, materially, once upon a time, has degenerated to its present low position. The recent past of our country has been one of decadence, of frustration, and of shaken nerves.

If Lanka wants freedom, it is to enable her children to draw nourishment from the breasts of living mothers rather than from dead mothers ; it is to lift her naked, starving, crushed and utterly miserable sons and daughters to heights where they shall be enlightened, prosperous and happy, and be able to look every other nation in the face, unashamed.

It is impossible for those who have not experienced foreign rule to realize how deadening an alien yoke can be to the soul of a nation. There have been and are, however, a few high-souled and broad-visioned Englishmen who have taken, and take, the larger view. Note, for instance, what that great Civil Servant of his day, John Still, had to say of Ceylon and the Sinhalese. He lived for years with the Sinhalese and understood their ancient civilization and culture and their national aspirations better than the average member of his class and community.

In the course of a B.B.C. talk on January 25th, 1934, he said: "Where foreign rule is imposed, however benevolent it may be, something is lacking to life. We who are proud of our own independence should be quick to appreciate patriotism in others. In capturing Ceylon it was not the Sinhalese whom we defeated but the Dutch, and nineteen years later, when the Kingdom of Kandy was joined to the domain won from the Dutch, the independent highland Sinhalese came to the British Empire by their own choice. That is a historical fact that should never be lost sight of."

John Still added : " The Sinhalese are a proud race. They are lighter brown than their Indian neighbours, more like northern

Indians, and they proudly claim to be Aryans—a title not popularly known in Europe until recent events in Germany. In Ceylon, the claim is very ancient, for in old stone-cut inscriptions, Sinhalese kings style themselves ‘Arya Chakravarti.’ or ‘Aryan Emperor.’ The Sinhalese are a likeable people. They have charming manners, are dignified, though often gay, rather irresponsible, witty, sporting; they play cricket like English schoolboys, keenly and fairly, and that means a lot.”

The influences which make any people a united nation are many and complex, and they vary from country to country, and from age to age. But whatever the influences may be, the resulting feeling of group kinship and attachment to a particular country is one of the chief characteristics of what we mean by the term ‘nationalism.’ In this sense nationalism is nothing new. In the sixteenth century, and long before that, Englishmen must have felt in some degree what only Shakespeare could express so well:

“ This royal throne of kings, this sceptred isle,
This other Eden, demi-paradise,
This happy breed of men, this little world,
This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England.”

But nationalism as we know it is something more than love of native land. In our time it has come to be identified with ‘patriotism,’ which is love of one’s native land reinforced by unquestioning loyalty to the ideals pursued by a society. After Ceylon had gone under the British and lost its last king, a certain monk who lived in Degaldoruva Temple near Kandy, composed a folksong which became widely popular among the Sinhalese, and they often used to sing:

Anē kūmbinnē—topaṭat rajek innē
Apaṭa nāta innē—innisa vada apī tāvennē
Rajek lābunotin—koḍi sēsāt nagannan
Bera paturuvannan —sādukaren gigum dennan.

“ O, happy ants ! a king you own,
We humans grieve, for we have none,
We’re desolate.
If our fates a monarch grant,
With banners, drums and solemn chant
We’ll celebrate.”

It is this allegiance to the ideology of an organized group and love of native land that makes nationalism what it is today—the dominant political force in the modern world.

Man is a social being ; he cannot live and thrive alone ; and he can be induced to work consistently for the good of his fellow-men, and in harmonious co-operation with them, only by participation in the life of an enduring organized group—a group that has a long history, in which he may take pride, and an indefinitely long future on which he may fix his larger hopes. Any group less than the nation, any such group as a Trade Union or party of Marxists or reformers of any kind, even if it be world-wide in its scope, is incapable of doing for its members what the nation can and in various degrees does do for its citizens, in the way of raising their lives above the animal plane of self-seeking or of merely family altruism.

The dynamic in post-war Asia is nationalism, not Marxism. No plan to preserve the peace can succeed unless this is accepted as a basic principle. The first concern of the Asian countries is to preserve their newly-won independence, which has released creative energies they had never known before, giving them a sense of purpose and a feeling of confidence. "We have just been through our struggle for independence and freedom," said Pandit Nehru, "and, naturally, nationalism was a war cry which warmed our hearts. It still warms our hearts and the hearts of almost every Asian, wherever you may go, because the memories of past Colonialism are very vivid in our minds. A few individuals may escape those memories or get over them, but the vast mass of the people do not forget so easily ; so nationalism is a strong force today in every part of Asia. Any other force, any other activity that may seek to function, must define itself in terms of this nationalism ; that is to say, if it is anti-nationalism it has to come up against this great force. If it is going parallel in line with it, then it may be helped by it."

Nationalism, then, is a great force, the greatest force in the modern world; and, like other great forces, it is capable of doing much good or much harm, according as it is directed wisely or unwisely. Love of one's country, or patriotism, does not necessarily involve or tend to generate chauvinism, the hatred of other nations ; though the two utterly unlike sentiments are often confused through lack of precision of thought and language.

The exaggeration of patriotic sentiment is not a new thing in the world. In all ages and in every country men have magnified

patriotism at the expense of other virtues. They have used it as a pretext for violating the rights of their fellow countrymen and for practising aggression upon foreign peoples. Within the last century, however, this exaggeration has taken a form which, in some respects, was unknown in previous centuries. And many offences and even crimes have been committed in the name of 'national interest,' or 'national honour,' or the right of the sovereign State to maintain and increase its power by any means it might think necessary. It is when we recall the long list of such offences and crimes of aggression and spoliation, committed by the great States against weaker neighbours or against the 'backward countries' of Asia and Africa, that we feel inclined to agree with the liberal and humane international idealists who say that 'nationalism must be abated,' the power of the sovereign State 'must be curbed.' And when, as so often happens, the people support such wars of aggression by crying "my country, right or wrong," we are apt to agree with Dr. Johnson that "patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel." So it may be, and so it often has been.

Sinhalese nationalism of today, however, has nothing in common with the pernicious nationalism which wastes strength and opportunity in the domination of other nations and in organising wars, commercial or military, against its neighbours. The efforts of Sinhalese Nationalism today are rather directed to raising the standard of our living, of our education, of our arts, music and literature, to developing our own national quality, intellectual, social and religious. It is in these realms, not in hostile and destructive rivalries and antagonisms, that we seek to exalt our nation. The festivals of song and music, of literature and art, which flourish spontaneously among us, and in which our people take a natural and unforced delight, are a demonstration of the genuine and sincere quality of our love of the arts.

Even in the very heyday of their military conquests the Sinhalese never lived by the Sword. He was no swashbuckler. His philosophy, a philosophy that will ever be anathema to the "successful" man, prevented him from thinking imperially; this he left to his neighbours across the Palk Straits. Our forefathers gave the sword to the paw of the lion—the emblem of our race—not for self-aggrandisement, but for self-defence. The Sinhalese Empire, stretching from the Maldiv Islands to the Shan States in the 12th century, was the outcome of Sinhalese reaction to unprovoked foreign aggression and wanton insult to the Sinhalese name.

The Sinhalese form 69 per cent. of the present population of Ceylon, which is more than double all the rest. If one excludes the non-Ceylonese the Sinhalese form 80 per cent. of the population of the Island. The claim that was put forward by a noisy section of the Tamils and backed by the local British press, that "the Sinhalese should not have more representation than all the minorities put together," was indeed a novel and amazing doctrine.

Dr. Drummond Shiels, a former Under Secretary of State for India, and later for the Colonies and a member of the Donoughmore Commission, refuting the charge made by the Colombo correspondent of *The Times*, London, in a communication printed in that paper of August, 10, 1938, wrote a letter to the editor of *The Times* on August 17th, in the course of which he declared:

"Having had some association with the inauguration of the present Constitution in Ceylon and knowing something of its working, I was surprised to read the message of your Colombo correspondent in your issue of August 10. In the absence of any other reply, I must express my strong dissent from some of his observations.....

"Your correspondent speaks of 'Sinhalese domination' and in such reference as 'having tasted power and found it good' might seem to be suggesting that, because the Sinhalese are the indigenous and majority community in the Island, they are not entitled to the natural results of this position. There is surely no matter for surprise still less for censure in the fact that 38 of the 50 elected members are Sinhalese, or even that all the Ministers are members of the majority community."

The 'fifty-fifty' cry never troubled the Sinhalese because its leadership was patently opportunist. It is rather unfortunate that within recent times this communal bogey has raised its head under a new mask. We hear now the cry for "Federation" and the creation of a "Tamil Kingdom." This new Party, which had its origin in the All Ceylon Tamil Congress which espoused the 'fifty-fifty' cry, calls itself the Federal Freedom Party. Its Tamil name is more illuminating. It calls itself in Tamil 'The Ilankai Tamil Arasu Kadchi,' which may be translated as 'The Ceylon Tamil State or Kingdom Party.'

This group believed in the 'fifty-fifty' school of thought which displayed a deplorable lack of understanding of the fundamental

requirements of the country at that time. At a time when post-war Asian countries were fighting for national freedom from all imperialist control, this group was concerned with dividing the parliamentary seats. In fairness to the group it must be conceded that no other group, except the Sangha, was concerned at that time with genuine independence: certainly not the group of varying ideologies ranging from communal to pseudo-racial opportunist groups which coalesced as the United National Party for the avowed purpose of seizing power. But that other groups failed to think in terms of national freedom at that crucial stage does not exonerate the Federalists. They are essentially of the same dye and stamp.

In a publication of theirs this Party lays down their fundamental policy as: "The attainment of freedom for the Tamil-speaking people of Ceylon by the establishment of an autonomous Tamil State on the linguistic basis within the framework of a Federal Union of Ceylon." It will be seen that the policy of the Federalists is to establish an autonomous union with the rest of Ceylon. The language, culture and economy of this State will be developed independent of the rest of Ceylon.

Next it lays down their aims as:

(a) *The recognition of the right of every Tamil speaking individual who has made Ceylon his home to full citizenship rights.*

Any true lover of Ceylon will want this not only for every Tamil speaking individual, but also for every individual who has made Ceylon his home, whatever language he may speak.

(b) *The regeneration and unification of the Tamil-speaking peoples of Ceylon by the removal of all forms of social inequalities and injustices, in particular that of untouchability which exists among a section of the people.*

Very noble sentiments, but the Federal Party has done little about it so far. Recently there has been an inquiry into the fundamental question of the right to temple entry for all Hindus, and a good deal of agitation and heat has been engendered in Jaffna in this connexion. As far as we know, the Federal Party leaders have not worked for the removal of these injustices in connexion with this inquiry. In this they have been in the good company of the leader of the Tamil Congress.

(c) *The realisation of a socialist economy with equality of opportunity for education and employment without regard to caste, creed, race or sex.*

How have the Federalists worked so far for the realization of a Socialist economy? It is the fashion now-a-days for everybody to be a Socialist. A student of Socialism knows that there have been in the past all kinds of Socialists—feudal Socialists, petty bourgeois Socialists, German or true Socialists, conservative Socialists and utopian Socialists. To this list may be added in our own day the U.N.P. variant—“efficient” Socialists. If the Federalists do not wish to use the term Socialism only as a blind for their communalism, they will know that Socialism never tends to divide but to bring together. Socialist economy thrives best in large territories rather than in broken up territory. Indeed, if the Federalists work for Socialism first and get it in Ceylon, they will easily have full internal autonomy to develop their culture, language and traditions, as they wish, and this is the only justification for asking for a separate federal unit.

It is a perfectly legitimate position for any group ethnically, racially, culturally and linguistically different from the others, to demand that they should be treated as a separate entity for certain specific purposes, provided certain essential conditions like geographical continuity, sufficiency of numbers etc. are complied with. In principle a linguistic or even a racial State may be desirable, when it can be formed with a fairly large contiguous geographical territory which has enough economic resources to support an independent country. On this basis a good case may be made out for linguistic provinces in a Federal India.

But Ceylon is an integrated single geographical unit, and is moreover far too small to sustain two States. A great many difficulties would, therefore, arise if an attempt were made to demarcate Sinhalese and Tamil areas. The present areas which are regarded as Tamil—the Northern and Eastern Provinces—are economically the poorest parts of Ceylon, and the Federalists, realizing this, claim that a large portion of the North Central Province is really Tamil and also that parts of the Central and Uva Provinces where Indian Estate Tamils predominate should also be declared Tamil. Herein lies the weakness of the Federalist case. Knowing that the present Tamil areas do not constitute an economically strong unit, they wish to rob areas which have for centuries now been regarded as Sinhalese.

The whole fallacy of the position of the Federalists is that, for the development of their language and culture, they ask that their economy be separated from the rest of the Island. One does not depend on the other. It will not affect adversely either the economy

or the culture of the Sinhalese if the culture of the Tamils is developed. Nor will it, in a country with a well-planned economy, affect the economy of the south if the economy of the north is developed, and *vice-versa*. In fact, it will be just the contrary. If a Socialist economy is realized—one of the avowed aims of the Federal Freedom Party—then both north and south, the whole Island will work as one unit bound by the strong ties of national interest.

Ceylon is a small Island situated on the world routes of trade. That is why our Island's chequered story has been one of conquest by one Power after another. Our future does not lie in splitting up but in becoming a strong united country. Of course we cannot live in isolation. That is impossible for any country in today's world. If we are united and strong we can not only choose our friends outside, but also allow full play for the development of the languages and culture of each separate ethnic group inside.

The more honest section of that crowd that raised the passions of the guileless Tamil folks against the Sinhalese, is raising once again the same cry, now asking for a Tamil Kingdom. The genuine kingdom is a kingdom of the people where everybody, Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims, Burghers, and even Europeans, as long as they are prepared to make it their home, is a citizen with equal rights and opportunities.

Fortunately, this misguided action of a few place-seekers is not shared by the real leaders of the Tamils. And it will be interesting to note some of the declarations of those minority leaders who had and have implicit trust in the good faith and the goodwill of the Sinhalese.

This is what the then Speaker of the State Council, Sir Waitlingam Duraisamy, an acknowledged leader of the Jaffna Tamils, said openly and fearlessly in Jaffna on 8th May, 1931, at a meeting held on the Jaffna Esplanade to demand the immediate grant of full responsible Government:

“Let us also take this opportunity of repudiating the suggestion that our action is a communal one and based on communal interests. We are not weak and we do not consider ourselves weak to depend on such sectional ideas. Though few in numbers we are able to think for the good of the whole of Ceylon. Never did I, in my political career, think and speak in terms of communalism when I advocated reforms

for the Island. We, Tamils, always worked for the good of the whole Island, making no difference between race and race. Our safety lies in the safety of the Sinhalese race. (*Loud Cheers*). Our freedom lies in the freedom of the Sinhalese race. Our progress in constitutional reforms depends on the co-operation of the Sinhalese. The policy of Divide and Rule shall not make us great. Therefore let me once again assure the people of Ceylon that we are acting on behalf of the whole of Ceylon and not from sectional motives."

The late Mr. Justice M. T. Akbar, leader of the Malay Community in Ceylon, said in the course of a public lecture at Kotte on 2nd November, 1930:

"I am interested in the masses more than in the educated section. I am interested when I am in the South in the Sinhalese people and when in the North in the Tamil people. Therefore, if I address a meeting of Sinhalese I hope my Tamil friends will realise that their proper place is Jaffna. If I am praising the Sinhalese people I am prepared to praise them in Jaffna. Even the Jaffna Tamil people will acknowledge that the majority of the people are Sinhalese, and it is the duty of all small communities to prop up the more important member. Is it not so? I am very glad to see that there are some school boys here. These young boys form the future nation. I want them to realise that they are now on the eve of very great changes that should bind them together. Please remember, you younger members of the Sinhalese race, that there is nothing which it is not possible for you to achieve in the future, and that you can reach the same zenith of civilization and intellectual power your ancestors attained in the past. It is not as if I were appealing to a race which has never known what civilization means. Please remember that the other members of other races who are allowed to live here through your bounty know that it is their duty to help the main partner to be strong and powerful. Some of us have come forward to help the Sinhalese because we are convinced that people who do not belong to your race believe far more in you than most of you young people do. I want to convince you of it."

Here is what the leader of the Muslims in Ceylon said publicly not so very long ago:

"We, the minorities (I am not speaking for the Jaffna and Batticaloa people) do not want equal representation with the

Sinhalese. What we want is adequate representation and good government. I prefer this country to be ruled by the Sinhalese," declared Sir Mohamed Macan Markar, in replying to speeches made at the public reception given to him at Galle on July 16th, 1938.

Sir Razik Fareed, another leader of that community, speaking at the F. R. Senanayake memorial meeting held on January 1st, 1950, said:

"The Moors have decided to support the Lion Flag as the national flag of Ceylon. From the times of the Sinhalese Kings, the Moors have been comrades in arms with the Sinhalese and have fought under the Lion Flag. There is no reason for them to ask for another flag. The Moors did not subscribe to the fifty-fifty theory nor do they want any special privileges. They have faith in the Sinhalese."

Next we have the utterance by that other distinguished leader of the Tamils, Mr. K. Balasingham, former member both of the Executive and Legislative Councils. In the course of a letter on "The Present Political Situation" in 1934, Mr. Balasingham declared:

"As I am addressing these lines to Jaffna Tamils only, I am not suggesting here what other communities might do to bring a better understanding with you or with each other. As for yourselves you will find that magnanimity is often the greatest wisdom even when dealing with those acting unfairly towards you. The opportunities for employment under Government in Malaya and even in Ceylon would become less as years go by in spite of all alliances you may form with Europeans. There is nothing to prevent the Sinhalese also from seeking such an alliance: and Europeans have valued of late Sinhalese friendship more than yours.

"One cannot carry on profitable trade with an unfriendly people. I am not asking you to sacrifice all your future at the altar of consistency. I am asking you to consider whether your future is likely to be better secured by cultivating the ties of friendship with a people with whom you will have to live in this small Island to the end of time. Do not encourage irresponsible persons to talk of Jaffna joining the Madras Presidency, when Indian Tamils are seeking employment

here. Do not compare Jaffna to Ulster, which is by far the richest part of Ireland. There cannot be much objection in the south to your separation if you really want to. Give up the notion that half a million Ceylon Tamils occupy in this country the position occupied by the Indian Muslims who form one-third of the population and who can be of great use in war both in and out of India."

Then we have Mr. E. R. Tambimuttu, leader of the Tamils in the Eastern Province, stating in open Council on 8th November, 1938:

"There is another reason why I move this motion. I believe I am forging today a stronger link than has been achieved by anybody in the past in binding together the minority communities and the major community. Whatever the differences of the Tamils may be, whatever the people of the north may think, we, the people of the east, feel that our destiny is bound up with the destiny of the Sinhalese. Our progress lies in their goodwill, and with their co-operation we can achieve our objects; and I also feel that the fears and doubts of the minority communities are groundless. I have consistently, during my career of 15 years in this Council, believed that our progress in Ceylon does not depend on the fifty-fifty principle but in co-operation and goodwill between us."

Mr. A. P. Thambyah, the leader of the "Depressed Classes" in the north, speaking at a general meeting of the North Ceylon Workmen's Union, said:

"It is time that an honourable and lasting settlement was reached with regard to the petty communal differences that existed between the Sinhalese and the Tamils. Personal, selfish and narrowly communal considerations both on the part of certain leaders of the majority community and of the minority communities have clogged the wheel of national progress. The salvation of Ceylon depends today on the proletariat classes who should decline the honour of allowing themselves to be duped by men who lack a high standard of public morals and unalloyed patriotism." (*Applause*). Continuing, Mr. Thambyah said that Mr. H. A. P. Sandrasagara, at a recent public meeting at Manipay, was reported to have attributed the present social ills in Jaffna to the

'low caste rebels.' It was a pity that there was not one man among the audience who had the spirit to repudiate that wanton and destructive suggestion. "The Sinhalese," continued Mr. Thambyah, are far more liberal and tolerant towards members of the depressed classes than those in the north. The depressed classes in the North should throw in their lot with the Sinhalese who would raise them morally, socially and politically, regardless of caste prejudices." (*Applause*).

That great American, President Theodore Roosevelt, once said: "We all of us tend to rise or fall together. If any set of us goes down, the whole nation sags a little. If any of us raise ourselves a little, then by just so much the nation as a whole is raised." Who is there to raise the nation as a whole? Whoever it may be; Sinhalese, Tamil, Muslim, Burgher or Malay, the true leaders of the minority communities have, as we have seen above, themselves testified to it in no uncertain terms. They believed in their hearts and fearlessly proclaimed their faith that they rose or fell only as the Sinhalese rose and fell. Although some of these leaders are no more, yet their words will remain as lasting landmarks for future guidance.

The truth is that the Sinhalese have always shown the widest tolerance and generosity towards the other communities, and have never failed to recognise merit wherever it was found. Mischievous propaganda can lead to no good; but it is reassuring to know that there are many politically sane and responsible minority leaders who do not believe in this bogey of Sinhalese domination, and would not for a moment barter away their birth-right of full citizenship for all the pomp of communalism.

There is a positive nationalism and a negative nationalism, and the latter is common. Negative nationalism consists in upholding everything national *because* it is national, and in maintaining a fallacious superiority over everything foreign. Modern patriotism decries every nation but one's own, robs other nations of land and trade, tricks them by astute diplomacy, and, having wounded their vanity and roused their ire, looks aghast when the time comes for murder. Individuals have mostly evolved beyond such behaviour, but nations, being slower to progress, as yet evidently have not. Nor, for that matter, have political parties. Although civil wars are less frequent than of old, they are re-incarnating as strikes, and political parties still put personal gain before the nation's good.

Positive nationalism seeks only to build and not to destroy. It looks defects in the face with a determination to remedy them ; it also acknowledges the fine qualities of other peoples, and strives to emulate them. It upholds the nation's integrity and honour in all international dealings ; and, lastly, it recognises the great brotherhood of humanity, in which every nation has to play its part. As John Addington Symonds happily puts it:

Nation with nation, land with land,
Unarmed shall live as comrades free ;
In every heart and brain shall throb
The pulse of one fraternity.

This is the Buddhist ethic and the last word in nationalism—the recognition that we are parts of the whole, and that, in politics as in everything else, co-operation must be the keynote of the future.

(2) *Marxism and Patriotism*

PATRIOTISM means love of country. Despite its general acceptance and its simple appearance, this definition is far from being clear or satisfactory. The word “country” is notoriously indefinite, while the “love” which is understood in connection with patriotism is equally indefinite. One of the best analyses of patriotism is that made by Dr. G. E. Partridge, and published in his work, *The Psychology of Nations*. As he views it, patriotism is a complex feeling based upon five fairly distinct factors.

The first of these is loyalty to country as a place ; as home ; as the land of one's forefathers ; as the seat of family traditions and relations. This is the patriotism sung by the poet. It arouses sentiments at once filial and paternal. The second factor is devotion to the ideas and ideals, the customs, morality and culture of a national group. Usually these ideologies are cherished as superior, and occasionally they are held suitable for more or less forcible imposition upon inferior groups. The third factor in patriotism is loyalty of the individual to the social group. In its most primitive form it is clan or tribe loyalty ; in our time it frequently becomes loyalty to one's social or economic class. The fourth factor is devotion to a leader, or government, or State. The leader easily becomes the embodiment of the group spirit and the national spirit. When he founds a dynasty, his authority and prestige gradually become merged in loyalty to the State. The fifth factor is the idea

of country as a personage, particularly as a historical personage. Through a process of imaginative abstraction, the various national components, such as population groups, natural features, industrial conditions, political and social institutions, are stripped away or ignored. Only the essence or spirit remains. The country becomes a person, and a highly idealized person. Nekrassov, in his poem, *Who Lives Well in Russia*, says:

“ You are poor ; you are abundant ;
You are powerful ; you are helpless ;
Mother Russia ! ”

Another example occurs in the declaration of a French writer that his countrymen were fighting, not for liberty or for civilization, but for France, “that most saintly, animated and tragic of figures.” Personification is undoubtedly the most vital and most powerful factor in patriotism. It makes the strongest appeal to the imagination and the emotions, and inspires the noblest deeds of self-sacrifice. Loyalty to country as a person frequently assumes the character of religious devotion.

While every one of these five loyalties is reasonable within certain limits, they are all susceptible of exaggeration and perversion. Devotion to country as a place has kept men in their native land when they would better have emigrated, and it has caused emigrants to remain attached to the land of their birth at the expense of the land of their adoption. Loyalty to national culture has impelled men to ignore or underestimate foreign culture. Loyalty to the social group frequently leads men to despise other social or national groups. Loyalty to leaders and to the State has often been responsible for the destruction of liberty. Loyalty to country as a person has caused men to forget that the State is made up of human beings.

The idealisation of patriotism may be summarized as internal and external. Under its internal or domestic aspect it exaggerates the obedience and loyalty due to the State, to the detriment of other obediences and other loyalties. It assumes in effect that the State can do no wrong, and that no individual, or any social group or social institution, has any rights which the State is bound to respect when they come into conflict with any object which the State sees fit to pursue.

Of course, this is sheer immorality. The State is a group of human beings organized for the common good. Since men have no

more right to do wrong in their corporate form than as individuals, they cannot obtain immunity for wrong doing by invoking the name of the State. No society is exempt from the moral law. Since the State exists for the welfare of its members, it can have no possible justification for ignoring the rights of any of them, either as individuals or as groups. The State is not an end in itself.

The Communist Manifesto sets forth economic class conflicts as the motive power in society that shapes the thought and actions of men during changing historical epochs. The idealisms of Liberty, Patriotism and Religion, the three motives of action which, Dean Inge says, have stimulated masses of men to act together, are ruled out.

The theory of historical materialism was expounded by Marx and Engels in their first publication of importance—*The Communist Manifesto*, written in 1847 ; it opens with a famous phrase: "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles." To this Engels afterwards added a not-too-happy footnote, that this phrase meant "all written history" and that later researches had shown that primitive man was Communist. This rather doubtful and wholly superfluous affirmation became incorporated into Marxist teaching, and for those Marxists to whom Marxism is a dogma, primitive Communism is one of its Articles. The existence of class-opposition is of great importance in the history of man. Yet one may well doubt whether the emergence of class-war and its ultimate issue corresponds to the Marxist thesis.

Under its external aspect, intense national patriotism exhibits a sharp antithesis to the doctrine of Communism as formulated by Karl Marx ; for this doctrine was, in its spirit and in the logic of its ideas, international rather than national. Hence it follows that a nationally-patriotic Communist is a contradiction in terms ; and the citation from Stalin at the beginning of this chapter is very much in point.

The general idea expounded by Marx was that the masses, the industrial workers especially, were exploited by the 'capitalist' class in each country; that existing governments were controlled by the capitalist class for that purpose ; and that conflicts and wars between countries were engineered by the capitalists and served the interests of the capitalist classes only. So far as the industrial workers were concerned, such conflicts and wars served only to keep them in subjection ; so that by being 'patriotic' they were merely being deluded and made to fight for interests that were not theirs. The real interest of the people—the 'proletarians'—in every country

was the same ; and the struggle which should concern them was the international revolution, the struggle of all proletarians throughout the world to free themselves from all capitalist exploiting classes throughout the world. In closing his Manifesto, Karl Marx expressed this idea by saying: "Proletarians of all countries, unite ! You have nothing to lose but your chains ! "

The Russian Revolution of 1917 put into practice an economic theory rivalling capitalism, the predominant economic order of our time, and its original principles aimed at providing a substitute for nationalism, the predominant political force of our time. Within the frontiers of Russia, Communism evolved a new economic order, but it could do little towards the solution of the political problem. The experiment of Communism in Russia gave rise to a strong antagonism in capitalist countries, and the leaders of Russia, far from conquering nationalism abroad, had in effect strengthened it all over the capitalist world. Not only did Communist internationalism give rise to Fascist dictatorships; there was, in the middle nineteen-thirties, no country in the world without a budding Fascist party.

The Revolution very soon came to be controlled and directed by the Communist or Bolshevik (majority) Party under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky. Both men regarded the revolution in Russia as merely the beginning of an international revolution that would spread to all countries, free the people from capitalist oppression, and establish 'classless' societies in which the nationalist governments controlled by the capitalist classes would 'wither away.' Lenin did not believe that the revolution could succeed in the long run in one country only; and in his time the policy of the Soviet government was designed to promote the cause of international Communism by assisting and directing, through the Third International (the Comintern), the Communist parties in other countries. In those days, accordingly, a good Communist was expected to divest himself of all national prejudices. To be 'patriotic,' to love 'Mother Russia,' was to be guilty of 'bourgeois' sentimentalism. The first duty of the good Communist was to renounce his allegiance to the nation, to regard himself as a member of an international brotherhood, and to be loyal to the supreme cause of the international proletarian revolution.

But Lenin died in 1924; and in 1928, after a series of purges, notorious political trials, and executions of most of their surviving old comrades, Stalin and a small group around him consolidated their dictatorship of the Communist party and through it

of the Soviet State. From that time the policy of promoting the international Communist revolution was gradually abandoned. One reason for that was the course of events in other countries, especially the rise of Fascism in Italy and Germany, which made it clear that there was no possibility of a Communist revolution in any other country within any reasonable time. Partly for this reason Stalin believed that the main task was to establish Communism in Russia, "socialism in one country"—a revision of Lenin as well as of Marx—and he realized that in order to do so it was necessary to win the support of the Russian people.

Not more than two-million Russians were members of the Communist Party. The great majority of the Russian people were but little interested in Communist theory, and cared nothing at all about promoting a world-wide Communist revolution. What they wanted was a government that would make things better for them and for Russia. No people in the world has greater attachment to their native land than the Russians. Their love of 'Mother Russia' could not be destroyed by official decree or any amount of intellectual indoctrination; and by far the best way to win their loyal support of the Soviet government was to appeal to their love of country—to make them feel that accepting Communism, being loyal to the Soviet government, and loving 'Mother Russia' were but different aspects of one supreme and undivided allegiance.

For these reasons Stalin subordinated the cause of international Communism to the national interests of Russia. He continued, through the Third International, to tell the Communists in other countries what they should think and do with every shift in the international situation; but his foreign policy was designed primarily to promote and defend the national interest. He let it be known that one could now be a good Marxist and still love 'Mother Russia.' Famous 'bourgeois' writers, such as Gogol and Tolstoy, could now be praised by the critics because they were so essentially Russian, and because their writings exhibited both the virtues and the defects of the Russian character with so much sympathetic understanding. Russian history ceased to be taught purely from the Marxist point of view; and the Bolsheviks went on to a nationalism so strong that they claimed with much justice the mantles of ancient Russian heroes, such as Peter the Great and even Ivan the Terrible. Thus was Marx reinterpreted once again.

This shift from the international to the national policy was bitterly resented by Trotsky and the old Bolsheviks who had been associated with Lenin in carrying through the Revolution. 'The Revolution

has been betrayed,' they said—betrayed by Stalin. But the Revolution had not been so much betrayed by Stalin as defeated by circumstances. Communism could be firmly established in Russia only by winning the support of the Russian people, and to win the support of the Russian people it had to make terms with Russian nationalism. Allegiance to international Communism was thus defeated by the far stronger allegiance to Mother Russia. Nothing was needed to make the defeat complete and final but the invasion of Russia by the German army.

When Hitler attacked the Soviet Union in 1941, Stalin needed all the force of patriotism, as well as all the force of religion, to draw from the peasants the last measure of sacrifice in the war against Germany. In return for public support of his leadership in the war by the highest dignitary of the Church, Sergius, the Metropolitan of Moscow, Stalin permitted the Metropolitan to be elected Patriarch and eventually accorded him an audience. The next day the Patriarch carried out his first international political task, which was publicly to demand a Second Front in Europe of the Soviet's allies.

A Government Committee on the Affairs of the Orthodox Church was set up to direct the actions of the 75-year old Patriarch. Thus, having reduced the Church to the status of an agency of the Government, Stalin began to make it an efficient instrument. The training of new priests, which had been forbidden, was permitted. The establishment of an Orthodox Theological Institute was allowed. That was a far cry from the days when the Marxists had placarded the walls of Russia with the slogan: "Religion is the opium of the people."

And it was Russian patriotism that kept the war going against the Nazis when Hitler had overrun Russian land to the extent of three times the total area of Germany. Only when Stalin began to call upon the spirit of Mother Russia did the masses begin to realize that this was their war. The Russia of Peter the Great saved the Soviet Union of Joseph Stalin. The Russian spirit conquered where the Marxist theory had proved totally irrelevant. One does not "die for the meridian of Greenwich," neither does one bleed for the "withering away of the State." Stalinism is strong because the Russians are Russians.

Nationalism in any sense is always an important political force, but it is only as exhibited in the historically created nation-state that it reaches the level of a religious faith. For generations the Russians have felt themselves culturally superior to the West. To preach

against "Russian nationalism," therefore, does not make historical sense. On the contrary, the forces of pan-Slavism and Communism have combined to instil in the Russian people a sense of racial and an almost religious superiority.

In Russia Communism identifies itself with nationalism and its most ardent advocates would fuse the combination into a national religion to take the place of the Orthodox Church. Indeed, Communism has itself assumed, in the minds and affections of innumerable devotees, most of the essential attributes of religion. Being incurably religious, man must have something to worship. Men who have lost definite belief in a personal God easily turn to the most important object in life, the national State. To it they give about the same kind of loyalty that in other ages they would have given to the "Governor of the Universe." Communism rouses in them all the deep and compelling emotions that exist potentially in a religious system.

Of late many foreign observers have inclined toward the theory that the Soviet leaders have become more nationalist than Communist. The Russians have equated nationalism with Communism and claim to have won the war through its inspiration—it had been a war not for international revolution but for Holy Russia. The Soviet leaders use nationalism as they use religion; they recognize the inevitability of both, and have put them at the service of Marxism.

Although Marxism has bred new fallacies, it must be given credit for having insisted on the inevitable conflict of interests in, and the moral inadequacy of, any social effort that founds its hopes on mere economic or material advantages. One of the most far-reaching questions raised by the Russian Revolution is how far a new economic system can change human nature. "My own impression," writes William Henry Chamberlain, Moscow correspondent of *The Christian Science Monitor*, in an article entitled "Russia Bows to Human Nature" in *Current History*, "is that the Soviet regime has changed human behaviour without necessarily altering the underlying motives of that behaviour.

"If the Soviet regime has changed human behaviour, human nature has had its effect on the Soviet regime. Once it was bad form for a Communist to show any enthusiasm over Russia as a country. The international aspects of Bolshevism were stressed. Today the Soviet newspapers are full of references to 'our great country' and 'our Socialist fatherland.' The fading prospects of

world revolution, together with absorption in the tasks of internal construction, have helped to make the average Russian citizen nationally minded.''

Nationalism has developed from the deepest of primitive instincts and emotional forces in mankind. It gathers from a thousand springs of common race with its common language, religion, folklore, traditions, literature, art, music, beliefs, habits, hates, fears, ideals and tribal loyalties. Men fight for their homes.

Nationalism will not be stilled by battle or defeat. It is fired to greater heat by every war and every peace-making. A fiercer nationalism looms out of every defeat and every victory.

Nationalism can be both a cause of war or a bulwark of peace and progress. The value of nationalism must not be ignored because of its secondary evils.

Nationalism, in the best sense, is a satisfaction, a fulfilment, bringing spiritual unity, better conduct of government, the flowering of progress and the expansion of cultural institutions, scientific research, art, music and literature.

There are about sixty separate nations in the world. And in the deep currents of human emotion, the primary interest of every citizen of them is his own country, first and foremost.

Nationalism, being fed with the earliest milk to every human animal, will continue as long as man inhabits this earth and will have to be embraced in any plan to preserve the peace. It is nonsense to talk of its eradication in this world. It is an essential condition of the good life for the masses of mankind. It is fashionable, among those intellectuals who claim for themselves a monopoly of enlightened liberalism and humane sentiment, to decry patriotism as a barbarous survival which, whatever excuse or justification it may have had in the past, can now and in the future work only harm to mankind. This belittling of patriotism is one of the stock features of the repertoire of the cosmopolitan in his attacks upon nationalism. But the more the influence of religion wanes, the more urgently and obviously do we need the influences of enlightened patriotism and of group loyalties of every sort.

Patriotism is a natural virtue and a noble sentiment—if it is noble. In the individual heart it means a love for all that is best and most beautiful in one's native land; for its woods and streams, for its good men and women, for its genius and history, for its ancient cities and old villages, for its art and literature, for its special character and culture. But, as Doctor Johnson said, and he was a lover of England: "Patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel";

and in its name nations will commit atrocious crimes, reveal a brutal selfishness, ride rough-shod over justice, and condone the vilest villainies—because of that old appeal to the basest instincts of the tribe: ‘My country, right or wrong.’ Why should that be? It is one of the psychological instincts of human nature, going back to the cave-man mind, and still defended by men and women otherwise civilized.

The great danger today is that the citizens will exaggerate love of country, and not that they will become futile internationalists. Of course, patriotism is one of the primary duties of the citizen who is bound to love his own country more than he loves other countries, just as he is obliged to love his family more than his neighbour's. This is reason and common sense. Adequate patriotism, according to the Buddhist ethic, is the continuous effort to promote the common good and to bring about more and more justice, tolerance, virtue and happiness in and among all classes of people in the land.

Chapter III

THE RIGHT TO LIBERTY

I have not become the King's First Minister in order to preside over the liquidation of the Empire.

—WINSTON CHURCHILL, Prime Minister of England during the Second World War.

It is not mission of the United States to underwrite other peoples' declarations of continued Empire.

—HENRY WALLACE, Vice-President of the United States during the Second World War.

(1) Four Types of Liberty

NEXT to the right to life is named the right to "Liberty," in the American Declaration of Independence; and to many persons this seems the primary and most essential right of all. As many crimes have been done in the name of Liberty, there are some who think they gain a point or two by substituting the Saxon term "Freedom." Liberty, it is admitted, is something French, foolish and frivolous. Freedom is English, solid and sensible, if just a trifle dull. Any such distinction is mere playing with words; it matters not whether we choose to take the Romance or the Teutonic term between which the conveniently composite English language offers us the alternative.

The American Declaration of Independence has contented itself with claiming the natural right to liberty, but, with more prudence than respect for logic, has abstained from giving any definition of the term: the attempt might possibly have led to some awkward and premature differences between the northern and the southern States. The French Declaration of 1789 seriously grapples with the difficulty. "Liberty," according to its fourth article, "consists in the power to do everything that does not injure another; thus the exercise of the natural rights of every man has no limits except those which assure to the other members of the society the enjoyment of these same rights." The corresponding article in the Declaration of 1793 has its first clause almost identical with the words used in the Declaration of 1789. "Liberty is the power which belongs to man of doing everything that does not injure the rights of another." What follows is a somewhat rhetorical flourish: "Nature is its principle, justice is its rule, the law its

safeguard : its moral limit is to be found in the maxim, *Do not do to another what thou wouldest not have done to thyself*—the negative side of an ancient and venerable moral precept.

There are indeed four separate kinds of liberty. When we read of the Sinhalese rebelling against the British, a hundred and thirty years ago, we say they were struggling for freedom ; we say that the Irish were deprived of freedom but have recovered it, that in Ceylon there is a movement for freedom. In all these cases we mean national liberty : freedom of a people from some form of foreign control, of political subordination in whatsoever form to a foreign power and allegiance to an alien king. That is one kind of liberty.

Then when we say that in 1215 the English people made a great and successful effort to secure liberty by wresting from King John the Magna Carta, or when we say that in 1789 the French people rose against their king and won their liberty, then we mean not so much national liberty as constitutional liberty, or political liberty—the determination to win freedom from a king, or an aristocracy, or a privileged class. These two conceptions of liberty are not the same. A nation may have the one and not the other. For example, in Russia under the Tsars, there was full national liberty ; Russia was an independent country not dominated by any other, but there was no political liberty whatever : today, in Spain under Catholic-backed Franco, in Russia, and in the Moscow-dominated countries behind the Iron Curtain, there is national liberty, but no political liberty.

Thirdly, there is personal liberty. This implies freedom to think as we will, to act and speak or express as we will, to worship where we choose or not to worship—subject of course to the equal rights of others. With personal liberty a man is not liable to arbitrary arrest or imprisonment, he is able to pursue his own lawful business in his own way. Here again it is not the same thing as national or political liberty. You may have those two and not the third. Some time ago, we saw in Ceylon the British doctrine, the doctrine in Magna Carta: “ No free man shall be arrested, imprisoned, dispossessed or exiled except by lawful judgment of his peers or by the law of the land,” in action. A young English planter, one Bracegirdle, described as an “ agitator,” had made himself obnoxious to fellow planters and to the authorities by, what was described as, “ stirring up the labourers.” Governor Stubbs ordered his arrest and deportation. But Bracegirdle appealed to the Supreme Court for a writ of Habeas Corpus. The judges decided that the Governor had exceeded his powers, and they

ordered Bracegirdle to be released. For what reason? Because the Governor, the British king's servant, had broken the promises made by King John at Runnymede 700 years ago. You may have national liberty and constitutional liberty and at the same time no full measure of personal liberty.

Perhaps the most fundamental of the personal liberties is that of freedom of expression, for it is this right which acts as the guardian of all others. It is one of the essential conditions without which democracy cannot exist. Democratic government involves, as its chief conditions, the ability of a people to choose its own government—and, as a necessary corollary, the right to dismiss that government—as well as the recognition of the right of opposition, so long as it does not attempt the overthrow of the State by violent means. Democratic institutions cannot exist without free discussion and expression of opinion—the life-blood whose circulation maintains these institutions in their full vigour; it is “the right of every man,” as Mr. D.S. Senanayake declared in his presidential address at the 1950 sessions of the United National Party. The only limitations which a democratic community can and indeed should place on the freedom of expression were correctly stated by the Prime Minister when he said: “We believe in giving to every man in the conduct of his affairs the maximum liberty compatible with a like liberty in every one else.”

In addition to the above three forms of liberty there is a fourth, which only in recent times have we realised as an essential part of full freedom. It is economic liberty. If a population, or a large section of a people, are subjected to grinding poverty, overwork, bad environment, if they are unable to enjoy the amenities of life, that may not be because any law prevents them, nor due to any formal restriction of any kind; neither is it because it is their desire to live a squalid, poverty-stricken, insecure existence. They are subject to an economic necessity; they cannot live the lives they would because they are too poor; they have not got economic liberty. Now here again people may enjoy the other three forms of liberty—national, constitutional, personal—but not economic liberty. That is the fate of the vast majority of people in all our civilizations today.

So it is clear that there are four elements in Liberty—National, Political, Personal, Economic. A man is free who lives in an independent and sovereign State, in a country which is democratic, in a society where the laws are equal and restrictions at a minimum, in an economic system in which he has the freedom given by a

secure livelihood and a full opportunity to rise by merit. It is best to maintain, if we can, all four of these liberties, but sometimes one must be limited for the sake of another. However that be, it is with National and Economic Liberty, that we propose mainly to deal in this chapter.

When a free nation loses her national liberty she becomes a "subject race," and the dominating power is called an Empire. The term 'empire' has had different meanings at different times. But the political reality which gave birth to this term is, and always has been, only the most obvious and spectacular manifestation of power politics—that is to say, of political power. At successive periods during the last four or five thousand years certain favourably placed people have, within the limits set by circumstances and their own capacity, extended their political power over peoples of diverse origin and culture. Such extensions of political power, whether continental or maritime, have been called Empires.

This exploitation of the indigenous resources of a subject people and the fattening on their life blood by the dominating overlordship is called Imperialism. At one time, part of the motivation of imperialism was dynastic or racial glory; at another, zeal to spread religious faith—for instance, Mohammedanism or Christianity. But in modern civilization, its motivation has been chiefly economic. A British Statesman, Lord Salisbury, who was Secretary of State for India, said in 1875: "As India must be bled, the lancet should be directed to the parts where the blood is congested, or at least sufficient, not to those which are already feeble from want of it." Perhaps it was exhilaration at the contemplation of these "congested parts" that led the imperialist Churchill to make his famous outburst cited above.

Imperialism is a word with a long and varied history, and it is used in different senses by different people. To some it is an ideal, an inspiration, a dream; to others, a great wrong, sordid in conception, and steeped in evil. We must, therefore, start by clearly explaining the kind of imperialism which we propose to discuss. What we here mean by the word is the aspect of it that deals with the struggle of peoples to regain their liberty from the British and other Empires to which they have been unfortunate enough to forfeit their National Freedom.

The modern British Empire was founded after the loss of the American colonies in the stormy period of the Napoleonic Wars. The driving impulse was in one word: Greed. With the discovery of the New World was started one of the most shameful chapters

of human history. Western European nations fell one upon another, and in the process cut each other's throats, for the right to slaughter and rob the unfortunate peoples who inhabited the newly discovered land. When the booty began to dwindle these adventurers turned their attention to the East.

In the East these freebooters found entirely different conditions than in the more northerly parts of America. Here they discovered nations with civilizations and cultures highly developed, and peoples who were prepared to shed their last drop of blood to preserve that heritage. Hence imperialism, in the East, became a new form of freebootery. Instead of outright murder and open robbery, a more subtle form of exploitation of the coloured man and the resources of his native land was contrived.

With the Cross in one hand and the sword in the other, offering to the native peoples a place in a heaven in the sky in return for a place for themselves in those peoples' land, these adventurers carved out for themselves permanent footholds in the coloured man's territory, and began an exploitation of peoples and their lands that make the pillagings of Genghis Khan pale into insignificance.

A thickly populated country like England, with an economy based on private competition, and capital constantly needing new fields of enterprise, had to be imperialistic. Such an imperialism needs must oust rival imperialisms : it had to repress and exploit the native peoples whose territory it robbed. The white man's burden is the burden of the coloured man's resources. Hence, imperialism is not, as declared by imperialists, a policy of peace and culture, but of war and robbery.

In the struggle for markets and raw materials, the British have fought and destroyed the national liberty of coloured people in every part of the world, and have overthrown in successive wars one rival imperial power after another—the Spaniards, the Dutch, the French, the Boers, and the Germans.

For the founding of her Empire the British fought a multitude of wars in Africa. They occupied Egypt, and conquered the Sudan and the Boer Republics. In Asia they fought a war against Persia, two wars against Afghanistan, numerous wars against Native States in India, three wars in Burma, two wars against China and, to add Lanka to the Empire, they fought a naval war against the French, two wars against the Dutch and three wars against the Sinhalese.

In 1815 the British waged their final war in Lanka by the unjustified invasion and occupation of the last Sinhalese stronghold,

the Kandyan Kingdom. By intrigue, treachery, conspiracy and false propaganda that would have made even Goebbels, Hitler's propaganda chief, blush, they forcibly deprived the Sinhalese of their sovereign rights and extinguished their existence as a free nation.

Britain subscribed to the Atlantic Charter by signing the joint declaration of the United Nations early in January, 1942, and the clause in that Charter which bears most significance to the peoples who have lost their national liberty is this: "That they respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of Government under which they will live ; and they wish to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been *forcibly* deprived of them."

When Mr. Churchill brought back the Charter, he hastened to explain that this clause did not in any way qualify British policy as regards her dependencies. Churchill said that it was primarily concerned with "the restoration of the sovereignty, self-government and national life of the States and nations of Europe now under the Nazi yoke."

If one reads the story of Britain's wars in Ceylon, they are about the most aggressive and least justified in the nineteenth century : Hitler enlarged and improved only a little on the technique. Indeed, one will be amused to learn that, in 1815, the British neatly anticipated Hitler's technique with a Proclamation which began by declaring: "Led by the invitation of the Chiefs and welcomed by the acclamations of the people....and the unanimous and direct demand of the people of five provinces constituting more than one-half of the Kandyan Kingdom to be taken under British protectionthe British have invaded Kandy," invaded this Buddhist Kingdom and extinguished Sinhalese Independence which had existed for 2358 years.

The same technique was employed to deprive the sovereign rights of another Buddhist Kingdom. In 1825 the British issued a Proclamation which began by saying that the King of Burma, "by his unprovoked aggressions and extravagant pretensions having forced the British Government to invade his Dominions," started the first Burmese war and annexed a part of Burma to India.

The same technique was again used by the British to deprive the sovereign rights of Siam, another Buddhist Kingdom, to a part of her dominion. In 1861 Governor Cavenagh of Singapore sent the sloop *Coquette* and the corvette H.M.S. *Scout* to Trengganu—one

of the indisputable Siamese provinces—to compel its Sultan, who acknowledged the suzerainty of Siam, to place his country under the “protection” of the British. When the Sultan of Trengganu refused to yield to Cavenagh’s demands until he had received orders from Bangkok to do so, the British dismantled his fort, spiked his guns, and destroyed all the shipping in his harbour.

Trengganu and the adjoining territory of Pahang, also tributary to Siam, were eventually annexed to the Malay States. After Japan conquered that country during the Second Great War, she handed these territories back to Siam. The benevolent Americans, the guardians of the sacred Atomic Bomb, have now taken these territories back from Siam and presented them again to Britain, and America is a signatory to the Atlantic Charter. During the First Great War the United States disillusioned the enslaved peoples of Asia and Africa with President Wilson’s Fourteen Points, and the joke today is the Atlantic Charter.

Siam would have been entirely annexed by the British but for the advent of another rival imperialist Power, the French. The ambitions of Napoleon III to extend the French Empire found an easy field in the peace-loving Buddhist Kingdoms of Indo-China and Siam. Aided by wily Jesuit priests familiar with Indo-China from long residence, France embarked on her game of grab, and herself began to imitate the successful British technique of forcibly assuming the “protection” of other peoples’ lands. Whilst depriving the Buddhist Kingdom of Indo-China of their sovereign rights, France began to take parts of Siam under her “protection”; this resulted in a clash between the two rival “protectors,” and only the jealousy between these two greedy Christian nations prevented the extinction of Buddhist Siam, as an independent kingdom.

“Until the early years of this century,” writes Alan Houghton Brodrick in *Beyond the Burma Road*, “the main preoccupation of the Siamese rulers was to resist British and French encroachments. Of course, the Siamese had to yield on many points and to submit to loss of territory, but they kept their independence. If we are inclined to blame the Siamese for taking advantage of France’s distress in 1941 and for demanding back lands they had had to cede earlier, or if we judge that the Bangkok leaders were ill-advised to accept from the Japanese the return of part of the Shan States and the former Siamese territory in the Malay Peninsula, we must remember that the Siamese have never been able to understand why they should have been forced to give up parts of their country to the

French or British on the pretext that the populations of the ceded tracts were not wholly Siamese. The Siamese were inclined to reply that neither were they wholly French nor British.”

British imperialism has been the *Māra* (Evil One) of Buddhism ; in its short career of 150 years it has destroyed more Buddhist kingdoms than any other single agency had done during the last 2500 years. In 1944 Mr. Amery could think of no reason to apologize for British conduct in Burma ; yet the conquest of Upper Burma was a disreputable episode in British history, and they have failed in one of the primary duties of a benevolent Colonial Power, which is to safeguard the lands of a peasant community. Is it any wonder that, with all their material possessions, happiness has eluded the British nation ! In their greedy quest of material wealth, they destroyed the Buddhist kingdoms, the guide-posts on mankind's path of happiness, now the destroyers themselves are lost in the wilderness.

(2) *A Union of Southern Asia*

TODAY the whole of the East is involved in a process of violent and turbulent change. Western rule turned the gaze of the educated Asian away from his country's immediate neighbours towards the ruling Power. Educated Ceylonese knew far more about Britain than about Ceylon or India. The Second World War began to break down these barriers. Apart from the rude shock it gave to Western rule and the prestige of the white races, the pan-Asiatic propaganda of the Japanese undoubtedly widened the horizon of many educated nationalists of South and South-East Asia.

Towards the end of the War, Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit declared in an address that World War III would be brewing in the East unless a solution was found for the Colonial question. She added: “The colonies have been occupied by the opposing forces for the first time in modern history, hence these colonies are going to be discontented. They will not easily go back to their *status quo*, after release by Japan, but will demand their freedom. They will get tired of changing masters. Until we translate some of the moral issues of this war into realities, freedom will remain a paradox and tragedy to one third of the world.”

With the disappearance of Mr. Churchill, who dominated British politics during World War II, the Labour Party which came into power, sensing the trend of events in South and South-East

Asia, itself took the initiative to transform the British Colonial Empire into a Commonwealth of Nations and offered to India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon, Dominion Status. India accepted the offer with the reservation that, as soon as her differences with Pakistan were settled, she would quit the Commonwealth. Pakistan and Ceylon accepted Dominion Status without any reservations. But Burma refused Dominion Status and U. Aung San, Deputy-Chairman of the Burman Interim Government, declared that Burma must remain an independent member of the great Asian family of nations. He said: "Personally I would like the closest relations with Britain, but not as a British Dominion. Burmans do not want that. We are distrustful of Britain since the time of the political deadlock, when the British authorities, after returning to Burma, refused for a long time to admit the popular Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League to membership of the Executive Council."

World War II broke up the pre-war *status quo* of a greater part of Asia like a giant hand jolting a jig-saw puzzle. With the liquidation of the British Empire in Southern Asia and under the impact of the Chinese Communist victories and the Dutch colonial war in Indonesia, Asia has fragmented into four contending blocs.

The first of these blocs, the North Asian bloc of "Communist States," embraces the U.S.S.R., Outer Mongolia, North Korea and Communist China.

The second bloc, best described as the "American Dependencies" situated in East Asia, includes occupied Japan, Formosa, South Korea and the Philippines.

The third bloc of "colonial powers"—England, Holland, Portugal and France—is also situated in South and South-East Asia.

The fourth bloc, located in South Asia, embraces the "conservative-nationalist" States, including India, Pakistan, Ceylon, Burma, Thailand and the Indonesian Republic.

The question of the moment is the future alignment of these blocs. The first bloc is quite clearly in sympathy with the Soviet Union. There is a great race in Asia today. Britain and America are trying to stabilize and unite the three non-Marxist blocs with the eventual aim of forming an Asian Union. The Russians, contrariwise, are attempting to exploit the internal instability of the non-Marxist Asian States and the contradictions between the blocs

to prevent this Asian alliance. The result will determine the tomorrow not only of Asia but also to a considerable extent of the rest of the world.

Asian and Western statesmen have recently speculated on the possibilities of creating a federation of countries in South-East Asia, or at least of establishing a regional machinery within the framework of the United Nations. Concrete proposals for closer political co-operation in South East Asia have come from several quarters. Pandit Nehru favours a comprehensive association of Asian peoples, unlike the Japanese Co-Prosperity Sphere based on racialism and antagonism to the West, but rather an association of free social-democratic countries which will remain outside the conflict now developing between Russia and America and will act as counterweight between them.

At a public meeting in New Delhi, Mr. Jayaprakash Narayan, the Indian Socialist leader, suggesting the creation of a third force of Asiatic countries to prevent World War Three, said: "Although I agree with the non-alignment policy of Prime Minister Nehru, I feel it should be pursued to its logical conclusion—namely, the creation of a third force of those Asiatic countries which are not prepared to accept the leadership of either America or Russia. This will serve as a preventive against the outbreak of another world war."

Mr. S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike, the then leader of the House of Representatives of Ceylon, in addressing the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association in 1947, said: "The Western world today is generally speaking, divided into two hostile camps—the U.S.A. and the Soviet Union. Britain tends increasingly to be drawn into the orbit of the U.S.A. In Asia we may not have any particular love for either of these two Western protagonists, and may wish to fashion out a way of life of our own, democratic, socialistic, cultural and religious. It may be that it is to our mutual interest to have a regional group of South-East Asian countries. This group may, of course, be able to continue, at least for some time, within the Commonwealth, or it may be possible, in the cold war that is now proceeding in the West, as some members of the Commonwealth get drawn more closely to the particular point of view for which the U.S.A. stands, for us to draw further apart, so that we provide a third force between the U.S.A. and the Soviet Union."

Viscount Samuel, recently addressing Commonwealth correspondents in London, expressed his sincere hope that the differences

between India and Pakistan would soon be smoothed out and that a Federation of India and Pakistan with Ceylon would be formed, with the inclusion later of Burma and Malaya. This Federation would give Burma and Malaya the stability that they now lacked, and these two countries would be able to eliminate their local disturbances and would cease to be trouble spots in the world. Integration of these countries would, he was certain, prove to be vital in furthering the peace of the world.

At the moment, though statesmen are interested in a union of Southern Asian States, there is a certain feeling that, for better or worse, each State should preserve its national sovereignty. Yet the ordinary man in the street is still very uncertain what it is all about. A statement made in Bombay in April, 1949, by Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, the then President of the Indian National Congress, that "Ceylon should be integrated with India," created a storm of protest in Ceylon. The fear of the people in Ceylon that India would seek to dominate Ceylon was a natural sentiment in view of India's size and power. Dr. Pattabhi, elaborating his speech in Bombay to the New Delhi correspondent of a Ceylon newspaper, said that "India must sooner or later enter into a treaty with the Ceylonese people so that Ceylon may become an organic part of the body politic." Commenting on Dr. Pattabhi's statement, Mr. S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike expressed the national viewpoint when he said: "Although Ceylon is a small country its people have always been jealous of their sovereign rights for which, in the long history of this country, they have always fought and striven. Having once again regained our freedom and sovereignty, it is not at all likely that the majority of the people of this country will submit to the type of subordination which obviously Dr. Sitaramayya has in mind."

There are certain inevitable difficulties at this stage of growth of a more perfect union between Asian States. One is that there is no machinery for public debate about the issues between Asian national governments, and, as a result, the actions which have to be taken towards Asian unity have to be taken by governments only behind closed doors. That robs them of much of their drama—but it is inevitable. For the art of compromise between sovereign nations is not very far advanced, and in international assemblies you cannot compel minorities to accept the majority will.

It is nationalism that makes the task of moving towards a more united Asia so hard: it is nationalism that makes public debate between the representatives of nations so very tricky. But however

strongly nationalism and political consciousness have been stressing self-government and sovereignty, international events today show that the pressure for larger unity is not less, but greater, than ever. This is plain from the purely regional groupings for purposes of defence, trade, welfare and the like, that are taking place in the world today.

Transforming a Colonial Empire into a Commonwealth of Nations is easier said than done. Self-government in a modern world is expensive, and not all colonies are economically sound enough to attempt it. Financial difficulties in the 1930s, for example, forced no less a member of the Empire than Newfoundland to relinquish its status as an independent Dominion, and it has now integrated itself with Canada. The American House of Representatives has passed a Bill to make the Hawaiian Islands the Forty ninth State of the Union. Quite possibly the Islanders hope for more prosperous days as citizens of the United States.

Today Ceylon is riding on a crest-wave of prosperity, owing to the booming prices of her primary products. But if a depression such as the one we had twenty years ago occurs, we will inevitably fall into poverty and discontent. At the 1945 Annual General Meeting of the European Association of Ceylon, its President, Mr. J.H.D. Stokes, in the course of his presidential address, uttered these pregnant words:

“There can be little doubt that the future of Ceylon must ultimately be bound up with that of India, and so for all of us the political developments in that great country are a matter of grave concern. Whatever solution of present difficulties may be found, Ceylon must always remain a small Island next door to a great sub-continent. Difficulties may well arise, but a narrow spirit of exclusive patriotism is apt in the long run to lead to poverty and discontent. A wider view may indeed incur the reproach of making too great a sacrifice to material advancement, but we must all remember that in this world no human institution can be perfect, and politics must ever remain an effective balance.”

The problem of Freedom is not, as any one will admit, a simple one. “The only freedom which deserves the name,” says John Stuart Mill, “is that of pursuing our own good in our own way, so long as we do not attempt to deprive others of theirs, or impede their efforts to obtain it.” *It*—that is, what freedom “means”—sounds simple, of course. To obtain and preserve freedom, however, is not so simple a matter.

The freedom of South-East Asia might have eluded South-East Asia for ever had Britain and the rest of the world gone under the Tojo-Mussolini-Hitler avalanche. The freedom of South-East Asia, which South-East Asians now cherish and is their very own, to live and breathe in, is a priceless treasure and must be guarded and protected with all the wisdom, tact, force and strength that they can muster. In the state the world is in today the only thing that will count in the preservation of freedom is powder and shot—lots of it.

The alliance of China and Russia has brought Moscow to the very borders of India. Moscow is now perched menacingly on the tableland of Tibet and on the borders of Nepal and India. The whole of Asia is threatened with militant Communism. Stalin has remembered Lenin's dictum that the quickest way to Paris may be by way of Peking and Calcutta.

The responsibility for the security of India from external aggression now rests upon India and by itself India may not succeed in overcoming an aggressor. India's meagre air force, guns and tanks and her second-hand Navy are too limited and out of date to cope with modern warfare, and it is dangerous to place absolute reliance on them in the event of any emergency. As the defence of Ceylon is interlinked with the defence of India, any catastrophe to India in the military sense would be an equal catastrophe to Ceylon.

Ceylon, just twenty miles off Southern India, is a way to invasion of India itself. It could even be a substitute for invasion. Whoever holds Ceylon holds the sea entrances to India's eastern ports, Madras and Calcutta. And whoever holds Trincomalee and Ceylon's aerodromes holds the key to the Indian Ocean and all its vital sea routes between Africa, Australia, India and the Middle East. Without Trincomalee and Ceylon the Japanese were able to make Allied transport in the Indian Ocean dangerous and expensive. With Ceylon they could have made it impossible.

It seems that India has been lulled into a false sense of security by the oft-repeated declarations of her leaders at home and abroad, that Indians are a peace-loving nation, and that they do not propose to join this *bloc* or that *bloc* lest they be dragged into any war that might flare up between nations who, in their practical and realistic frame of mind, believe that war is a necessary evil and must come when it will.

The claim of Pandit Nehru, in which most of India's leaders share, that India proposes to lead the world in this respect is indeed a laudable one—but to the question "War or Peace?" there is no set answer; and when the whirlwind is sweeping everything before it, there is no time to think but to act, and those who can hope to escape its devastating consequences are those who have worked and toiled and planned ahead instead of burying their heads in the sand as the ostrich does, oblivious to the realities around it.

Indian leaders who decry "blocs" must not forget the simple truth that "Union is Strength." India needs friends on whose help she can rely in times of dire need. Is she going about it in the right way to make friends for herself, who will stand her in good stead in her hour of trial? The impression with Indians in India is that their membership of the United Nations gives them the necessary guarantee for peace. If this were so, one cannot understand the frenzy with which the European and American nations are throwing themselves today into the armaments race. It is good to preach world citizenship and to be a pacifist. It may be even better to be a *Satyagrahi*. But what may be an ornament in an ascetic like Mahatma Gandhi may prove an impediment to a nation living in modern times.

It is true that the ideal of world citizenship must be the goal of the human race. But this goal cannot be reached by a fanatic leap over the Himalayan obstacles. The world today is a *dis-union* indivisible. We cannot get to a federation of the world all at once; our citizens cannot yet be citizens of the world. The national State remains a dominant force today, and is likely to remain so for a long time to come. Nationalism cannot be abolished by decree.

Before the Brotherhood of Man there must first be an intermediate stage—a Co-operative of Sovereign Nations. Before the World Parliament of Man there must first be Regional Organization to deal with appropriate matters relating to peace, security, and economic progress.

The regional organization is easier to advocate in general terms than to adapt to the real needs of each region. Many would oppose a Southern African region dominated by South Africa and Portugal. A South Seas region would need to be run on paternalistic lines for a generation. A Caribbean region could only operate as a confederation of free nations. There are important Chinese and Indian interests in South-East Asia. If the Governments of China and

India interpret their role in South-East Asia as being primarily for the protection of their nationals, a regional organization incorporating both India and China would serve to express national rivalries rather than to co-operate on common problems.

If some form of regional unity ever emerges in South and South-East Asia, its foci will be the twin colossi of India and China. These two countries are so vast and their ideologies so different that it will not be practicable in any foreseeable period of time to bring them into a single Union. But around these countries are smaller States which have intimate historical, cultural and religious connexions with each other and would like collaboration for cultural intercourse, economic planning and defence purposes.

Until recent times much of South and South-East Asia was popularly known as Farther India. India has left the mark of her past influence from Lanka and Angkor to Borobudur and Bali, and traces of Hinduism still survive mingled with Buddhism, and, more strangely, with the Mohammedanism of the Malayan and Indonesian world.

In the Netherlands Indies, where bitter struggles have been in progress ever since the end of the War, the Indonesians have gone far towards recovering their sovereignty. The Indonesian inhabitants deeply resent the discriminations practised by the Dutch who looked down on them as inept and inferior. Young Chinese and Japanese firebrands, moreover, have been preaching Asian self-sufficiency in the interior villages of the Islands for a generation. The Indonesians would look on an association with India with enthusiasm. They would see here an outlet for their products, increased wealth for the Islands, and the complete social acceptance which European rule denied them.

Burma has lately made her debut on the world stage as a sovereign and independent State. But she is now weakened by internal difficulties and has turned to the Commonwealth for assistance in suppressing the Karen and Communist rebels. Burma—which like Ceylon has always been deeply influenced by India's example—would fall in line with a proposal to enter into a Union for defence purposes.

Much of the reason which has driven Russia blindly forward in a quest for warm-water outlets will cause the Chinese Republic to seek access to the Indian Ocean and the short route to Europe. Burma, which rests on the east shoulder of the Bay of Bengal, undoubtedly will be considered Chinese *irredenta* territory. It once belonged to China, and until the middle of the nineteenth

Buddhists and racially they are closely akin to the Chinese. That kinship is emphasised by the fact that in the last half century there has been extensive Chinese settlement in these former kingdoms, and much subsequent intermarriage.

The Kingdoms of Cambodia and Laos, over which France has relinquished her protectorate, have each a distinct nationality; they are Theravada Buddhist and for a long period of time India has exercised an important cultural influence. The sharp development of Annamese national feeling in recent years has produced by way of reaction a corresponding growth of national feeling amongst the other two peoples, which has expressed itself in resistance to Annamese and Chinese settlement and commercial domination.

Chinese expansion into South-East Asia has gone on quietly and unobtrusively. No wars have been declared nor ultimatums delivered. The more effective methods of emigration and colonization have been followed. A big stake has been built up in Burma, Siam, Indo-China, Malaya and Indonesia. Should China ever adopt aggressive expansionist policies, her Government will lack no excuses for intervention in South-East Asia.

Another factor imparting unity to Southern Asia is the wealth of the component countries in natural resources, not only food but all those raw materials required by modern technological civilization. For its size it is incomparably the richest region in the whole world. This wealth cannot but expose it in a peculiar way to the rapacity of stronger Powers. Furthermore, some of the countries directly concerned are small entities, politically weak, and most of them are in process of emerging from colonial status.

Therefore as the nucleus of one regional "bloc," India and the countries that till recently formed the British, French and the Dutch Colonial Empires in South Asia may be brought together. India, Pakistan, Ceylon, Burma, Malaya, Indo-China and Indonesia, which for over a century had been under British, French and Dutch tutelage, by uniting can work for their mutual benefit and safeguard their sovereignty more effectively. The "bloc" might in time be broadened to include Nepal and Thailand, independent countries which have close cultural and religious affinities with India, Burma and Ceylon.

Thailand, which preserved its political independence less through its own exertions than through its fortuitous part as a buffer between rival French and British imperialisms, would be glad to join such a Union to protect her freedom in the future. The

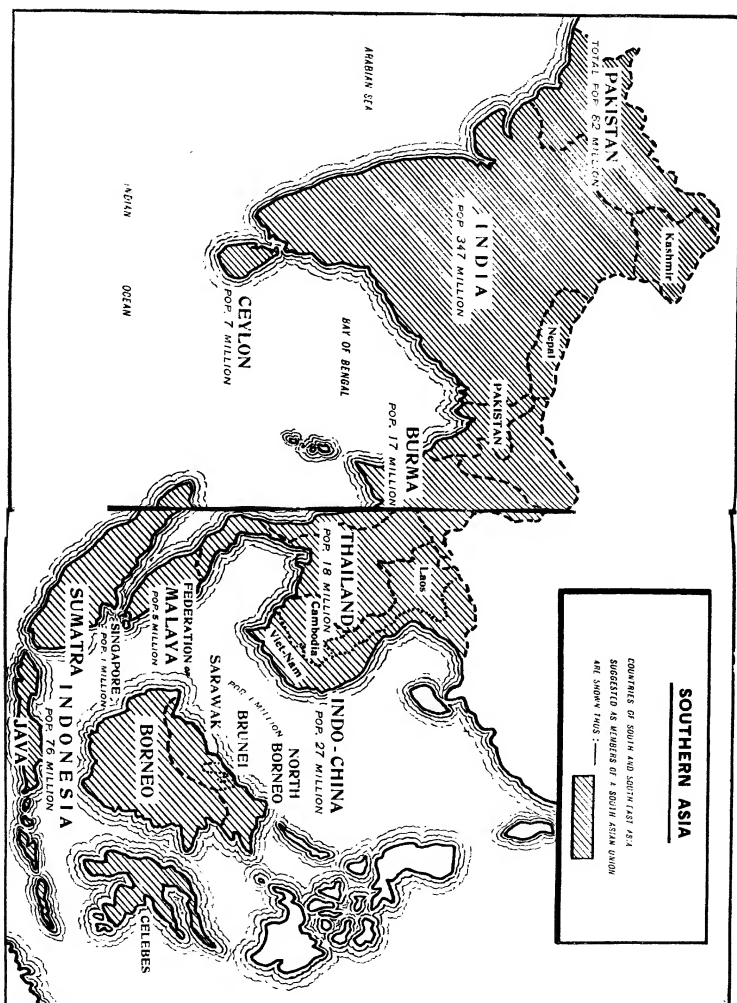
presence of Theravada Buddhist countries like Ceylon, Burma, Cambodia and Laos would give Thailand confidence to throw in its weight to such a Union.

The proposal, therefore, is that India, Pakistan, Nepal, Ceylon, Burma, Malaya, Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, Indo-China, Sarawak, Borneo and New Guinea should unite into a South Asian Union for purposes of defence and economic cohesion. This area, with a population of 580 millions, is rich in natural resources. Yet for centuries most of its people have lived in great poverty. The results of a joint economic policy for this area will be wide-spread. The well-being of one-quarter of the world's population can be improved. Free institutions can be maintained and strengthened, and world trade can be expanded. Before the last war this area provided most of the world's exports of rice, jute and rubber, more than three-quarters of its tea, almost two-thirds of its tin and one-third of its oils and fats. Therefore this Union should involve something more than the usual military alliance, and should be constituted on the following lines :

1. A joint foreign policy.
2. A joint defence policy.
3. A joint economic outlook.
4. A common budget for defence purposes.
5. One joint legislative body for defence questions, tariffs and related matters which would also discuss the foreign situation, the danger of war, the necessary measures of defence ; and would determine not individual taxes but the proportion of individual State revenue to be devoted to joint defence.
6. One joint executive body for defence questions only, responsible for framing the estimates necessary to secure the Union as a whole from attack, and to lay them before the legislative body.

The joint legislative and executive bodies of the Union must be given by their national States sufficient authority to make defence and security a first charge on the individual States' revenues, while leaving to the national governments the distribution of the burden amongst individual taxpayers.

The proportion of the share of total defence expenditure should be allocated to the individual States on the basis of their respective



taxable capacity, on the analogy of the work of the Childers Commission (1896) in estimating the respective taxable capacities of Great Britain and Ireland.

However, the future of the regional machinery is uncertain. The natural tendency as time goes on will be towards closer integration with the various international organs of the United Nations. If this happens, it is to be hoped that political issues will not interfere with the very useful economic functions which it fulfils at present.

The Charter of the United Nations, in Article 52, encourages the establishment of regional arrangements for peace and security consistent with the purposes and principles of the United Nations. In addition, a sub-commission of the Economic and Social Council of the U.N. has drafted a plan for the long-term co-ordination of European economy. Many persons see this proposal as the forerunner of a European Union or Federation. Winston Churchill, war-time Prime Minister, has been stumping western Europe with speeches advocating a "United States of Europe" as a "sovereign remedy."

Few of the existing movements expect to attain anything like the system of government in the United States, within our lifetime. Europeans use the term "federation" to cover a group of nations under a loose central authority, an organization by no means comparable to the U.S. federal system. The Customs Union now being developed between Belgium, Holland and Luxembourg, in which many Europeans see the seeds of European economic unity, might eventually be called a "Federation." In general, it may be said that practical champions of European unity want a gradual development from a free association of nations toward confederation and eventual federation.

Before these proposals result in a Southern Asian Union, a number of difficult hurdles must be surmounted, some with explosive booby traps attached. The Indo-Pakistan conflict over Kashmir is not easily capable of a solution satisfactory to both sides. For a successful Union it is essential that there shall be agreement on the most important social purposes of the time. It is a misconception to think that India and Pakistan can pursue independent policies in international affairs, for this might mean, in practice, mutually hostile policies with grave injury to both. This also applies to the economic sphere in their Customs, currency, and industrial policies.

India's prestige, although somewhat lowered by communal conflict, has been high among the nationalist leaders of South-East Asia. If extremists look to Russia, the moderates look to India, and depend on it to champion their cause before international bodies. The Indian leaders, on the initiative of Pandit Nehru especially, have not been slow to fill this role, and at Delhi in March, 1947, India made a strong bid for the moral leadership of Asia.

On 13th June, 1952, the British Labour Party published a declaration of foreign policy in which it declared that "the future of Asia depends above all on the leadership provided by the Indian Sub-Continent." It declared also for rapid progress towards self-government in Malaya and for the introduction of the Peoples' Government of China into the United Nations. On the same day *The Manchester Guardian* expressed the belief that "India should be the light and leader for non-Communist Asia." This liberal newspaper declared that the Indian National Congress had to find a policy which would enable it to hold its own with the Communists. The General Election, it stated, showed that its popularity was waning in parts of South India. The Congress Working Committee had decided it was time for large-scale land reform. In some States the new agrarian laws existed, but had not been implemented; in others they had still to be passed.

These were all excellent proposals, said the liberal organ, and asked: "Would the Working Committee have pressed them with equal vigour, if it had not been for the Communists in China?" The Indian Goodwill Mission to China would report on the constructive performances of the Chinese Government, the *Guardian* said, and added: "Communist China will have scored a point if it becomes the pace rider of Congress India, and if the Congress program can be represented as imitating Peking."

The great problem which faces the world today is the harmonising of the freedom of each nation with the global freedom of mankind. Experience would seem to indicate that one of the first functions in the preservation of freedom is the development of regional policies in the different major areas of the world—Asia, Europe and the Western Hemisphere.

All human experience shows, however, that whatever this regional or world structure to preserve peace may be, it will be futile unless the foundations are properly laid in each national State. The League of Nations failed in preserving peace because it failed to still imperialism, colonialism, militarism, greed.

fear, hate and revenge. It even stimulated some of them. Not only did these foundations of sand render the League of Nations futile, but they will render any superstructure of Leagues, Asian Unions, European Councils, world institutions, world congresses and world parliaments futile again, unless each national State is organised to give the under-dog a fair chance in life. National liberty is of no consequence without the fourth freedom of which we have spoken earlier in this chapter—Economic Liberty.

The theory of individual economic liberty found its first large expression in the famous *Wealth of Nations* published by Adam Smith in 1776. Its main theme was that of enlightened self-interest, the proposition that each man, when left free to pursue his own advantage as he sees it, will be led "by an invisible hand" to promote the welfare of all. Hence absolutely free competition becomes the sole rule for social guidance. The Government need not meddle or interfere with trade or industry by setting up tariffs or regulating wages.

It remained for John Stuart Mill to fortify and enlarge Smith's industrial liberty by building into it the framework of individual freedom. Mill was as clever as he was laborious, and as noble-minded as he was clear-headed. Mill's *Liberty* is the best expression ever given to the reasoned idea of individual freedom, enjoyed in association with one's fellows. He takes the ground of the Golden Rule, that a man may do anything that he wishes to if he does not injure his fellow men. The State has no right to interfere with him, not even for his own good, as long as he is not injuring other people.

Every current has its eddies of counter current. So it was with the movement of democracy and liberty. It called forth opposing movements of reaction; it also bred the search for liberty in a different direction called Socialism.

Modern Socialism came in with the machine age. It takes its departure from the ground that such things as equality, the right to vote, and free competition will not of themselves warm the body or feed the stomach. More than that, it was argued, as by Karl Marx, the great apostle of the Socialists, that the more free the competition the more the weak are trampled by the strong. People with no property, he says, have to sell their labour power to people with property, who would not buy it unless it brought them more than they gave for it. Seen thus, individual liberty and equality are not bread but a stone. What does it profit a man to have the right to refuse work, if refusal means starvation?

Chapter IV

CHRISTIANITY AND CIVILIZATION

“ The task of the Church in Ceylon will not be finished till the remaining ninety per cent. of the population, who are not Christians, are converted.”

—THE RT. REV. LAKDASA DE MEL on the day he was elevated to the dignity of Assistant Bishop of the Anglican Church in Ceylon.

“ In the sphere of religion the situation is most intriguing in the East no less than in the West. The sciences of psychology and sociology, biology and anthropology are undermining the foundations of orthodox theology in every historical religion. The varied accounts of religious experience seem to support the fashionable view that God is but a shadow of the human mind, a dream of the human heart. Religious geniuses who speak to us of ‘the other world’ are fit subjects for investigation in mental hospitals. The traditional arguments do not carry conviction to the modern mind. If everything has a cause, then God has a cause. If God can be without a cause, even the world can be without one. An imperfect universe as ours cannot be the work of a clever and capable God. History does not bear witness to the spirit of God. M. Loisy observes : ‘The historian does not remove God from history ; he never encounters him there.’ Our yearning for a juster world where all the mistakes are set right and tears wiped away shows, if anything, the unjust character of this world. No tangible evidence of God’s existence, no proof which will enable us to say : ‘Lo ! he is here’ or ‘Lo ! he is there’ is forthcoming. The silence of God when men are asking for signs is the strongest proof of Atheism. If some happen to cling desperately to a faith in God in spite of all this, it is a matter not so much for surprise as for regret. Their faith is as frail as the straw clutched at by a drowning man, whatever the theologians, who have vested interests, might say.”

—SIR SARVAPALLI RADHAKRISHNAN, Spalding Professor of Eastern Religions and Ethics at Oxford University, in his book *Kalki*, or The Future of Civilisation.

(1) *Western Religion and Western State*

Now that Hitler and all his crew have succumbed, what then ? The problem facing mankind today is of a magnitude unparalleled in the history of the human race. The need to avoid making another false start is one of almost terrifying urgency. Think what depends on the aims, on the method, on the spirit in which we approach the task. Obviously it cannot be left in the hands of religious propagandists or party politicians ; the issues at stake are too vast for that.

The Christian Church is already in the field, claiming, in terms of an ambiguous, guarded, and strictly *ad hoc* unanimity, to be the predestined guardian of the legitimate liberties of the nations. Not very long ago we were favoured with the spectacle of English Primates and the Moderator of the Free Church Council concocting, with the assistance of a Roman Cardinal, the declaration that "no permanent peace is possible in Europe unless the principles of the Christian religion are made the foundation of national policy and of all social life."

Light was thrown from a novel angle on the war aims of the United Nations by the unguarded statements of Lord Halifax and Sir Samuel Hoare, to the effect that Britain, in the last war, fought in defence of Christian Civilization, and by the criticisms these statements provoked both from non-Christians associated with the Allies' war effort and by Christian spokesmen within Britain.

What exactly did the framers of this declaration mean by "in defence of Christian civilization" and "the principles of the Christian religion?" If they meant that unwritten code of ethics, deriving from a high sense of social responsibility, which is observed by all well-disposed and sufficiently enlightened people, the Church has no monopoly of or patent in such principles. If, on the other hand, the declarants meant that certain conceptions of duty peculiar to the Christianity of the Bible and/or of the Church should be imposed on all and sundry, as if they were of incontestable moral validity and of universal obligation, then it behoves us to be on our guard against any such revival of ecclesiastical absolutism. In that case, indeed, the cause of freedom, for which men of all creeds and of none have made the supreme sacrifice, is once more in peril at the hands of the Chief Priests and the Pharisees. There can be no liberty so long as civil or religious dictators arrogate to themselves the right to say "believe and obey, or . . ."

There were occasions during the last war on which even *The Times*, (London), considered the dear old phrase "Christian civilization" an unsuitable description for the war aims of the Allies. Discussing General Chiang Kai-shek's visit to India, it observed: "It is indeed of decisive importance for the world's future that China and India are ranged together in defence of those principles of freedom and organization which the Axis Powers, and not least Japan, have set themselves to subvert and destroy." What a strain it must have been to omit the pious adjective before the word "principles."

Is any Christian Church convincingly in the picture when it claims, as such, to be in the true line of the apostolate of freedom ? No ! and again no ! Freedom cannot be established upon the negation of the one fundamental condition of freedom. The attitude of the Christian Churches to that essential condition has always been and still is, at the best, equivocal, and, at the worst, openly and actively hostile.

What is this fundamental condition of freedom ? In answer we cannot do better than quote Professor Bury : " If the history of civilization has any lesson to teach, it is this; there is one condition of mental and moral progress which it is completely within the power of man himself to secure, and that is perfect liberty of thought and discussion. The establishment of this liberty may be considered the most valuable achievement of modern civilization, and as a condition of social progress it should be deemed fundamental."

And what is this " Christian civilization " these churchmen and statesmen talk so much about ? Even to the distracted civilization of our day the contribution of Christianity has been a feeble one. Whatever goes by the name of civilization in our time has very little to do with Christianity. It was quite an accident that the peoples of Europe and America were Christians at the time the Industrial Age dawned on those continents. If, by any chance, Buddhism had prevailed amongst those peoples when they became the " Lords of the Machine," the history of the world would have been far different. It was, for instance, simply due to historical causes that Europe became Christian and Asia Minor Moslem, and that England, for instance, adopted its particular brand of Christianity. Consequently it seemed improbable that the particular country and age in which one happened to be born had received an exclusive revelation of the truth.

What is the Church of England's contribution to the civilization of that country ? Read *The Bishops as Legislators*, by Joseph Clayton, a churchman, with a preface by the Rev. Stewart Headlam, who calls it a record of " the crimes and follies of the Bishops." It is. No Bishop supported the Bill for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in 1809. Only three attended the House of Lords, when, in 1815, a Bill was introduced to Prevent the Use of British Capital in the Slave Trade. They took no part in the discussion of the Prevention of Cruelty to Cattle Bill in 1824. In 1832 fifteen of them were still on the opposition, though even the King was

intimidated, to the Parliamentary Reform Bill. Two only voted for the Bill for the Total Suppression of the Slave Trade, and only one or two ever supported the various temperance measures that were introduced from 1839 to 1844. Lord Brougham bluntly said that "only two out of six-and-twenty Right Reverend Prelates will sacrifice their dinner and their regard for their belly....to attend and vote."

The Bishops opposed every measure to relieve the workers. Lord Shaftesbury was so angry when they opposed his one pet proposal that he described them as "timid, time-serving, and great worshippers of wealth and power." And he added: "I can scarcely remember an instance in which a clergyman has been found to maintain the cause of labourers in the face of pew-holders." By voice and vote they resisted every possible reform, such as Catholic Emancipation, the admission of Dissenters to the University, the Jews Disabilities Bills, the Great Reform Bill, successive attempts to repeal the Corn Laws, and Home Rule Bills. Humane legislation, so long as it did not gravely affect the landed interest, did not usually excite their violent antagonism, but, they opposed the use of anaesthetics in child-birth, because God had said: "In pain and suffering shalt thou bring forth."

They voted against abolishing the death penalty for theft, and, of course, against the opening of Museums on Sunday. Indeed, it is difficult to discover any reform, until recently, in which they took an active part. Can one wonder that Carlyle called them, "stupid, fetid animals in cauliflower wigs and clean lawn sleeves, Bishops, I say, of the Devil—not of God—obscure creatures, parading between men's eyes and the eternal Light of Heaven?".....

Next we come to the black record of Roman Catholicism. In the opinion of Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople in the fifth century, "the number of Christian Bishops who would be saved bore a very small proportion to those who would be damned." We have no desire to blacken the pages of this treatise with the tale of the horrors of the Inquisition, when during three centuries three hundred thousand persons were put to death for their religious opinions in Madrid alone.

The so-called 'horrors of the French Revolution' were a mere bagatelle, a mere summer shower, by the side of the atrocities committed in the name of religion, and with the sanction of the Catholic Church. The Jacobin Convention of 1793-4 may serve as

The Spanish Church dreaded the confiscation of its vast wealth; it feared that it would lose its hold on the illiterate masses if a Liberal government set out to educate them and relieve their material miseries. "No one can be at the same time a sincere Catholic and a true Socialist," declared the Encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*. The literary glamour which was responsible for many conversions in a happier era could not survive the shock of seeing the Church claim that the Spanish Civil War—so nakedly a plot hatched by the Axis Powers—was a war for "Christian civilization."

The Italian clergy, especially Bishops and Prelates, became outspoken supporters of the Fascist regime, and some of the Italian Cardinals delivered the most extravagant eulogies of the late Duce, even in moments when the Vatican and the Government were engaged in bitter disputes. The extent to which the Italian clergy had imbibed the spirit of Fascism was shown at the time of the Ethiopian War. The moral conscience of mankind, Catholics included, almost universally condemned the Italian adventure, because, in the words of Don Sturzo, from "the formal point of view it was a clear and intentional breach of the Covenant of the League of Nations, and from the moral standpoint it was indisputably a war of aggression and conquest."

But this was not the viewpoint of the clergy or the Catholic Press in Italy. Their answer to the Catholics of other nations was, first, that the government of a country is the sole judge of the justice of its own cause; and, second, that the African war is a war for "Christian civilization." Cardinal Schuster, Archbishop of Milan, went particularly far in enthusiasm. In an address to the School of the Fascist Mystic at the time the title of Emperor of Ethiopia was bestowed on Victor Emmanuel, he likened Mussolini to Constantine and Augustus, and declared: "After the March on Rome and the Lateran Agreements, God has answered from Heaven by crowning through the Duce's work, by crowning, I say, Rome and the King with an ever flourishing imperial laurel."

Even before the Ethiopian War began, priests, bishops and even Cardinals all over Italy were presenting it as a crusade for the conversion of the Abyssinians to the true faith. Cardinal Hinsley, in 1936, said—"If Fascism goes under, God's cause goes under, too! When confronted with the moral indignation of the whole world, Pope Pius XI felt compelled, in an address of August 27, 1935 (a month before Ethiopia was invaded), to remark that if,

as was believed abroad, this were to be a war of conquest, it would be truly "an unjust war." But, he added, "we do not believe, we will not believe in an unjust war." With reference to the contradictory Fascist claims that Italy was fighting a defensive war but that she had a right to expand, the Pope declared that "if the need for expansion is a fact, then that must be taken into account; the right of defence has its limits and moderation that must not be overstepped if the defence is not to be culpable." He concluded by admonishing the responsible statesmen not to do anything "that might aggravate the situation and irritate hearts" and not to lose "precious time" in carrying out a "work of pacification."

After the Ethiopian campaign had ended in an Italian victory, addressing the opening ceremony of the Catholic Press Exhibition (May 12, 1936), the Pope took occasion to express his joy that the ceremony "coincided with the triumphal joy of a great and good people, for a peace which should be an effective factor and a prelude in the true peace of Europe and of the world." This was his final benediction of the Ethiopian adventure.

Most commentators failed to understand fully the rather equivocal utterance of the Pope. Its meaning, however, was made clearer in a series of articles by Father Messineo published in the Jesuit periodical of Rome, *Civiltà Cattolica*, the editor of which is appointed directly by the Pope; these articles were later reprinted in book form under the title *Giustizia ed Espansione Coloniale*. His argument is simple. A nation which is so over-populated that the soil cannot support all its inhabitants has the right to provide for their needs by occupying, forcibly if necessary, lands and regions which happen to be undeveloped and which are not needed by the nation that owns them. All other means which have been suggested for solving the problem of over-population—birth control, emigration, etc., are either immoral or unjust. If "vital expansion" is a right, then the expanding nation has also the right to use force if the exercise of that right is opposed by force. In such a case the one who sins against justice is the owner who resists the needy aggressor.

There is a widespread impression that the Catholic Church, if complacent towards Italian Fascism, at least put up a fight against German Nazism. It is true that since the defeat of Germany the Pope has used strong language about the "Satanic spectre of National Socialism." But there is no great heroism in slaying the slain. At a time when there is an undue disposition to take

Catholic claims in this regard at their face value it is well to remember certain facts. Adolf Hitler was a Roman Catholic. He may or may not have been a believing Catholic: that is not the point. The Catholic Church claims as its members all who have been validly baptized, and does not recognize the right to apostatize. Hitler, therefore, was subject to the pains and penalties prescribed by the Church for mortal sin.

And if any man was a mortal sinner, the creator of Buchenwald and Belsen, the persecutor of the Jews, the planner of the Second World War, and the mass murderer of millions of Poles, Dutchmen, Frenchmen, Britons, Greeks, Yugoslavs, Russians, and Americans (to say nothing of his German dupes) was surely one. Many a medieval ruler was excommunicated for far less. Yet not one word of censure did the Catholic Church ever pronounce on Adolf Hitler till he was reported to be safely dead. The present Pope, as Cardinal Pacelli, was papal nuncio in Germany during the years which saw the rise of the Nazi Party, and knew all about it. When Hitler came into power Pacelli was Secretary of State at the Vatican. An official censure (even if it did not amount to excommunication) of the Nazis for the orgy of arson, torture, and murder that marked their rule in Germany would have earned the Papacy the respect even of anti-Catholics. It would have entailed no danger to the Pope; and if it had, since when have Catholics been conscientious objectors to martyrdom?

But the word was never spoken. Nor was it spoken in the war. The Pope washed his hands of responsibility when Germany invaded Norway and Denmark, on the ground that no Roman Catholic country was involved and that he had to "keep in mind the 30,000,000 German Roman Catholics." He looked the other way when German bombs devastated Rotterdam and Coventry, when German executioners wiped out Lidice, and when whole populations in Eastern Europe were reduced to slavery. And when Petain turned traitor and France fell into the clutches of the Germans and their Vichy accomplices, the *Osservatore Romano* hailed it as "the dawn of a new and radiant day not only for France but for Europe and the world," and the *Catholic Herald*, a paper calling itself British, informed its readers that "all that is vital in the soul of France, purified and glorified in heroic suffering, can look out once more upon Europe with a clear Christian purpose."

When H. G. Wells was once asked the question: "Do you regard the Roman Catholic Church as a definite menace to human freedom,"

this was his answer. "I think," he said, "that it stands for everything most hostile to the mental emancipation and stimulation of mankind. It is the completest, most highly organised system of prejudices and antagonisms in existence. Everywhere in the world there are ignorance and prejudice, but the greatest complex of these, with the most extensive prestige and the most intimate entanglement with traditional institutions, is the Roman Catholic Church. It presents many faces towards the world, but everywhere it is systematic in its fight against freedom."

"O Liberty, what crimes are committed in thy name?" exclaimed Madame Roland on the scaffold. Might we not with equal truth substitute "O Jesus" for "O Liberty?" It is the great irony of history that Western civilization, which has built itself on struggle and wars, should worship the figure of Jesus. The Sermon on the Mount is an epitome of the thought of one who lived and taught among a subject people. But the nations of the West are lords of the earth. Behind them is a record of blood-bought conquests, and today their statecraft yet consists in maintaining these conquests intact.

From the very earliest times, the missionary of Western religion, as he penetrated "the dark places of the earth", was accepted in his religious capacity with great suspicion. He might have been martyred, but his moral pretensions were always under suspicion. Today the missionary no longer stands by himself; he blends, in the mind of the "native community", into the background formed by Western statecraft. He is seen, in the East, as an integral part of the imperialistic advance of the Western State. Sometimes he has been the unwitting dupe of that statecraft, as in the case of those missionaries whose deaths have been made the pretext for territorial demands.

Until the resentment and resistance of the coloured peoples brought all Western imperialism under attack, this inter-relation of the Western Church with the Western State was not only not questioned; it was celebrated as evidence of the working out of the purposes of Divine Providence. When a delegation of Methodist Bishops called on President McKinley to congratulate him on his decision to annex the Philippines, he assured them that his decision was inspired by a desire to Christianize the Filipinos as "our brothers for whom Christ died."

At no point has the relation between religion and State been more intimate than in the State's exercise of its war-making powers.

No Western State has ever gone to war without receiving the blessings of religion. The war songs of all of them are filled with appeals for the favour of Heaven. The involvement of Western religion with the Western State compromises its moral pretensions to be the predestined guardian of the legitimate liberties of the nations.

The impossibility of divorcing Western missionary effect from Western State imperialism has led to the rejection of the ethical and moral claims of Western religion by non-Western peoples. The feebleness of the Church when confronted with the determination of the State to resort to war, or its actual blessing of that reversion to barbarism, negates its right or claim to moral leadership in the West itself.

British statesmen had availed themselves of every opportunity, during World War II, to declare their war aims as the ushering in of a Brave New World for the peoples of their Empire. Now we know at least one thing, namely, that this "better life," in the coming world of the Four Freedoms, for which the flower of the world's manhood had shed its blood, is to be delivered to the "heathen" tied up in the same package with Christian theology. This, and this alone, is the simple meaning of the utterances of Lord Halifax and Sir Samuel Hoare.

The Sangha of Lanka, if they are not to be traitors to the charge entrusted to them by the Master on his deathbed, must be on the alert more than ever now. The intolerance shown by the Church Fathers to our religion and to our national aspirations make it only too clear that we have indeed a very hard struggle ahead. The past record of our relations both with British statesmen and Christian churchmen has been very significant indeed.

Let us go back to the day on which King George the Third of England entered into the heritage of Vijaya and his successors. For 2000 years the Kings of Ceylon had been the Defenders of the national faith of Lanka. What did General Brownrigg mean when he pushed the King of England to this position on March 2, 1815? Every British sovereign, on succeeding to the Throne, has to take an oath to defend the national faith of England, which is, Protestant Christianity. Can he conscientiously be defender of both Buddhism as well as Christianity? During the course of its discussion, in the State Council, the Dominion Status Bill was characterised both by a Sinhalese and by a British member thereof as a "fraud and a hoax." No truer words were ever spoken in that august chamber since it came into being.

By Article 5 of the Convention of 1815 the British Government declared Buddhism inviolable, and promised the "maintenance and protection of its rites, priests and temples." Was this promise fulfilled? What happened to the numerous benefactions of land and property gifted to the Temples and *Devalas* by Sinhalese Kings and pious Buddhists? Who defended and protected these, during the last one and a quarter centuries, whilst they were being confiscated, robbed and despoiled?

And there is the affair of the "Sri Chandrasekera Trust." A pious Buddhist, in the event of the premature death of his only heir, left his whole Estate valued at several millions of rupees as a Trust, the income of which was intended by the donor to be used for the welfare of Buddhism in general. The premature event happened and the Trust came into being.

In terms of the Trust deed, certain officials holding high office became the Trustees. And what has happened? From the very start, the Trustees who happened to be Christians have paid lakhs and lakhs out of the income of the Trust, for the use and benefit of their own institutions. If it had been a Trust created by a Christian and the trustees had been Buddhists, the latter's conscience would have revolted against similar behaviour.

Dryden, on the *Death of Oliver Cromwell*, wrote:

"His ashes in a peaceful urn shall rest ;
His name a great example stands, to show
How strangely high endeavours may be blest,
Where piety and valour jointly go."

When one thinks of the ashes in the urn, in the mausoleum at Horetuduwa, of the pious Buddhist whose piety created the original Trust and of the way in which his intended benefactions to his own national faith have for the most part been either frustrated or diverted, one is tempted to parody Dryden's lines and to say of Sri Chandrasekera's own ashes:

His ashes in a troubled urn do rest ;
His name a great example stands, to show
How strangely high endeavours may be curst
Where greed and grab together jointly go.

(2) *A Challenge to Buddhism*

THE introduction of Buddhism to Ceylon was not merely the introduction of a religion to a country, but it was also the dedication of a nation to a religion. The King and the people became subordinated to the Faith and the Sangha. The King became, the "Protector of the Faith," and, as Dutugemunu on his death-bed said, "the servant of the Sangha." For over 2000 years, the social structure of the land rested on this basis, until that fateful day, March 2, 1815, on which "Christian Governors" replaced Buddhist Kings.

After the generals had won this ancient Buddhist Kingdom for the British Crown came the missionaries, to "win Ceylon for Jesus Christ." At first, with direct subsidies from the State and afterwards through indirect subsidies as educational grants, Christian missionaries embarked on an open career of "conquest". Western Princes and the Western Church replaced the Buddhist Kings and Buddhist Church; and the Sangha, which had been throughout the centuries not only the guardians of the spiritual, but also the sponsors of the material welfare of the people, were relegated to the background.

In this humiliating position it had been their shame and sorrow to witness the proselytising of the country, the neglect of its national institutions, the despoliation of its pious foundations, and its governance for the benefit of those who came to exploit it rather than that of its own indigenous population.

To substantiate the latter statement, it is not necessary to do more than refer to the reports (quoted elsewhere) of the special Commissioner of Relief of Distress occasioned by the 1935-1936 Malaria Epidemic. The result of over a century of British rule, in the Commissioner Mr. Newnham's own words, was: "privation", "starvation", "inappropriate food", "disease", "lethargy", "ignorance" and "pessimism."

The Commissioner, a British Civil Servant, might well have been describing the conditions of the millions of serfs in Russia before they, in sheer desperation, sought refuge in Bolshevism. The verdict of the Commissioner, that the distress revealed by the epidemic had been the normal level of life in thousands of villages, constitutes the most terrible indictment yet published of over a century of British rule in Ceylon.

Nevertheless, even though driven to taste this bitter cup for over a hundred years, the Sangha, in keeping with the traditions of their

religion, inculcated in the people the spirit of tolerance as well as loyalty, as is evidenced by the fact that there has been no serious political disturbance or upheaval whatsoever in the country during the last one hundred years.

But the spirit of tolerance was not appreciated elsewhere. The advent of a Buddhist majority in the State Council which came into being in 1931 as a result of the Donoughmore Reforms was widely resented in Christian quarters. The Christian minority which had hitherto influenced the actions of the bureaucratic government felt that the prerogative which they had exercised for over a century was slipping away from them, and every opportunity was availed of to discredit "Sinhalese Ministers" and "Buddhist Councillors."

The Malaria Epidemic revealed the fact that what the State Council had inherited from Crown Colony Government was a "rubbish heap," and its determination to clear up this "mess" was vehemently denounced as "anti-British," "anti-Christian," and "nationalism." Imperialism and "Churchism" joined hands, as comrades in arms, in creating an uproar from Colombo to London.

The local British Press started a campaign for the withdrawal of the universal adult franchise granted by the Donoughmore Reforms. Lord Rothermere in his newspapers carried on a morning and evening campaign against "professional politicians" which had for its avowed object the withdrawal of the Reforms. A scurrilous attack on "Ceylonese politicians" by one J.G. Wall, entitled "*Britian's Folly—The Lesson of Ceylon*," was sponsored by Lord Rothermere in a Foreword to which he wrote :

"Britain's first trial of self-government for an Eastern Dependency has been going on for over two years in Ceylon. *It is a manifest and complete failure.*

"This book is a straightforward, detailed and objective account of that failure. Let those misguided people who are pressing for a premature grant of Dominion Status to India read it and then ask themselves: Is it worth the risk ?

"Mr. Wall shows, by actual quotations, facts and statistics, the reality of all those dangers which we who oppose the folly of Indian autonomy foresee. He supplies abundant proof that the Eastern races who enjoy the benefits of British rule are not yet ripe for self-administration. He discloses a small minority of professional politicians, exposed to every inducement of corruption, and animated by a spirit of blind opposition based on anti-British political bias."

by evangelism that it can live and grow, and that is fully understood. The Church is strong enough to go out and win Ceylon for Christ, if it will take all the risks of that adventure—and they are not imaginary.”

In their imperialistic march, the Western Powers had found the Christian missionaries to be their best allies. A few years ago an Indian Christian said: “When the missionaries came to India they had the Bible in their hands and the Indians held the land. Now we have the Bible in our hands and they have a strong hold on the land.” Well, there is nothing very startling in this. The technique of the Church always worked that way. It was a native of Africa who was credited with saying: “The Christian preacher comes and says ‘look up,’ and when we look down again the land is gone.”

The bewilderment of the Buddhists who have been, for some time, wondering what was behind the manoeuvres of the Christian Church, became more confused when, recently, with feverish haste, the Churches began to create “sons of the soil” as Bishops. Now, by the unguarded statements of British statesmen and local churchmen, light has been thrown on these strategic moves. During the war days Lord Halifax and Sir Samuel Hoare declared that England was fighting to “win the world for a Christian civilization.” And in Ceylon the cat was let out of the bag by the Assistant Bishop of the Anglican Church in Ceylon, the Rt. Rev. Lakdasa de Mel, when he declared that the task of the Church in Ceylon would not be finished till the remaining ninety per cent. of the population, who were not Christians, were converted.

The cry of ‘conversion’ by Bishops in outposts of the Empire is only a subdued note of the louder pedal of “win the world for a Christian civilization” by imperialists in the heart of the Empire. Winning for a “Christian civilization” simply meant winning for the Empire, and ‘winning for the Empire’ means enslavement for purposes of exploitation. In the figurative language of Churchill and lesser lights of the Conservative Party, it was, “we have not become the King’s Ministers in order to liquidate the Empire.”

“What do these worthies

But rob and spoil, burn, slaughter and enslave
peaceful nations?”

—MILTON

As a result of four centuries of persecution, proselytism, and what Sir Emerson Tennent described as the “rapacity, bigotry

and cruelty" which characterised every stage of the "spiritual and temporal conquest of Ceylon," ten per cent. of the population of Ceylon has been converted to Christianity; and now the bishops openly declare that they are out to convert the remaining ninety per cent. also. This means the Christianising of five million Buddhists and one and half million Hindus. What impudence! "Conversion, we would remind Rev. de Mel, is an ugly word," wrote Dr. Malalasekera in *The Buddhist* of December, 1945. "To us in this country," added the learned Professor of Pali at the University of Ceylon, "it has all manner of undesirable associations, of force, of bribery and corruption, of de-nationalisation, of the exploitation of poverty and ignorance and greed, of disease and helplessness. Attempts at conversion breed strife and ill-will; the days when Buddhists and Hindus tolerated proselytisation are gone. They will meet the challenge to their faiths with vigour and determination. They will no longer accept the claims of any religion to be the sole path of righteousness or happiness."

The Buddhists are quite prepared to meet the challenge. But we fear the fight is not going to be a clean one. The Bishops are already in the ring, hitting below the belt. In his address to the 1945 Diocesan Council, Bishop Horsley said that the Christian Church which flourished in the 6th century A.C. in the capital city of Anuradhapura was swept away by persecution. "Christianity is, then," said the Bishop "no new thing—but Christianity is a challenge. We are always bound to raise opposition to ourselves if we are true to our Master. Anyway, the persecution of 13 centuries ago brought back the Church 11 centuries later."

This reference was to the stone with a Nestorian cross in sunk relief dug up by the Archaeological Department amidst the ruins of Anuradhapura. For the presence of Nestorian Christians at Anuradhapura in the 6th century, reference may be made to Cosmas Indicopleustes (Winstedt's edition, p. 322). This is the only reference in an ancient authority to this subject, and Cosmas has nothing to say about any persecution of the Christian community by any one.

But any stick was good enough to beat the Buddhists with, and Bishop Horsley hurled his stick to mark the opening of the great campaign of conversion. The days when stories of persecution and villainies of heathens, induced rich English widows to contribute to Church funds are gone. In this enlightened age deluded people are not so easily picked up, as they were a century ago.

The bishop spoke of persecution having swept away the 6th century Nestorian church at the ancient capital of Lanka. What did the bishop expect to find amidst the ruins of Anuradhapura ? A 6th century Nestorian church still standing in all its glory like that most historical tree in the world, the 2000 year old Sacred Bo-tree, existing amongst the splendour that was Anuradhapura's ! Gone are the days of the miracles of the Christian Church.

From tradition, records of history, the trend of opinion prevailing among local students of history is that in old Ceylon there were no religious persecutions. The Buddhist kings were known to have provided accommodation for other religionists. The very fact that a Church was allowed to be built in ancient Anuradhapura is evidence of the spirit of tolerance which permitted it. When, as it often happened, civil wars raged or foreign armies invaded, religious orders left the country. There were occasions when no Buddhist Sangha could be found in the country, and rehabilitation proceeded by process of sending for bhikkhus from India, Burma and Siam.

"One great gift of Buddha to the world is quite overlooked," says Arthur Lillie in *Buddha and Buddhism*. "In the Institutes of Manu are noted down all sorts of penalties for the heretics who question the Brahmin claims. We know, too, that Plato was sold as a slave for his opinions, and Socrates put to death. Buddhism is the religion of the individual, and from the first it seems to have held toleration of other creeds as a logical outcome. A few years ago an English officer in Ceylon, in civil employ, gained the affections of his district. At his death the Buddhists came forward and offered to build an English church as a memorial. In India during the one thousand years of Buddhist rule all creeds and all philosophies were tolerated, a priceless and unexampled boon to the thought of the world."

At the 1946 Diocesan Council the shibboleth of conversion was resurrected and the theme of some of the parsons was "winning the villagers of Lanka for Christ." The parsons seem to imagine that the introduction of Christianity into our villages will provide a panacea for their ills, and make the people better and happier. They want to make out that the present condition of the people is due to the religion they profess. They apparently fondly believe that, given a new label, the people will sing with joy and become prosperous.

It is strange, but significant, that Christian missionaries seldom talk of the propagation of their religion except in terms of war.

“*Winning for Christ*,” “*Warring against heathendom*,” “*Fighting for the Cross*”—these are but a few of the sanguinary figures of Christian speech. It is indeed ironical that the cause of the Prince of Peace, as Jesus is often claimed to be, has to be espoused by such militaristic missionaries. Rightly, we think, has the Christian Church been dubbed the Church Militant. Even Christian hymnology has not been proof against the ravages of the bug of militarism, and otherwise sweet-tempered young women and inoffensive old ladies are heard not infrequently bawling out lustily: “Onward, Christian soldiers, marching as to war” and so on and so forth.

Fed as they have been for centuries on the concept of conquest and the vocabulary of violence, is it surprising that the Christian nations of the world, and the countries which have allowed themselves to be overrun by “Christian civilization,” are the world’s best (that is to say worst) exponents and practitioners of imperialism and militarism?

(3) *The Twilight of the Gods*

No civilization has yet survived the downfall of its gods. Its doom is declared when the faith and idealism which formed the basis of its laws, the inspiration of its art, and the meaning of its life, are challenged by scepticism, and then abandoned in disbelief. Some other and better civilization may take its place, or it may be buried and forgotten in jungles where its ancient monuments are hidden in the undergrowth.

Such scepticism and unbelief are now undermining the foundations of the so-called “Christian civilization” of the West. While man’s control over nature’s energies approaches the miraculous, anarchy reigns in the moral and aesthetic, as well as in the intellectual sphere. One opinion is as good as another opinion. God and the soul are set aside as outworn superstitions, the denial of any future life rings the passing bell of Western religion.

We have arrived at a stage of human evolution that must be almost unprecedented in history. A large portion of mankind—that portion which is responsible for all that material progress which has ended in the discovery of the atom bomb and corresponds with the part that claims to have created a heaven on earth, the so-called “Christian civilization” of today—is gradually forsaking the religion in which it has lived for nearly fifteen centuries.

A great European country, Russia, has openly and officially rejected its ancient faith and espoused Atheism. Christianity is there ridiculed in theatres and picture-houses. Slogans are everywhere displayed which declare religion the chief enemy of human welfare and progress. "Give up fearing God, brothers." "Religion is the opium of the people." Christianity, or what remains of it, is fast dying. What is now left of the old theology in the circles of the educated and intelligent? What do we now hear of the Fall of Man, the plan of salvation, the sacrifice of Christ, the redemption of the world through the shedding of blood, of predestination, of the blessings in store for the believer, the torments that await the infidel? Who now believes, as did St. Augustine, in the damnation of unbaptised infants, or that a man's actions in time determine his destiny throughout eternity? The Christian religion is dissolving before our eyes.

For a religion to become extinct is no new thing. It has happened more than once in the night of time; and the annalists of the end of the Roman Empire make us assist at the death of paganism. But, until now, men passed from a crumbling temple into one that was building; they left one religion to enter another; whereas the Christians are abandoning theirs to go nowhither. That is the new phenomenon, with the unknown consequences, wherein we live.

The religions of Egypt, Greece and Rome, all came, lived out their time and died. The religions of the Chaldaeans, Assyrians, Druids, Scandinavians Teutons and the Incas followed, in their course, with a hundred sister religions, all living out their time, and died in bitter struggles against the then "rising" new.

Today people look back upon those as days of falsehoods and superstitions; but the people of those days were as intelligent as the people of today, as the crumbling remnants of the ruins of their civilizations manifest. Yet, those people were blind to the deceptions of priestcraft, which deceptions they bitterly fought to defend unto death.

Yes, those were the olden days, and in the future cycles these days will also rank as olden days, and such future peoples will look upon the gross superstitions and falsehoods of today with a wonder as to how people could have believed such things: they giving us the same credit that we must have been as intelligent as they will then be. And, with a pity for the deluded people, they will read the records of the last dying struggles put up by the followers of the Christian dogmas.

Today there is not a prominent minister of any Christian Church that would dare take a stand in a city hall and defend in debate the once accepted infallibility of the Christian Bible. This is backed up by the findings of Dr. Lang and the late Dr. Temple's selected investigation committees, when they found:

"The tradition"—not the fact, be it noted—"of the inerrancy of the Bible commonly held in the Church until the beginning of the nineteenth century cannot be maintained in the light of the knowledge now at our disposal."

These selected committees also found the following: That the historical evidence for the Virgin Birth was considered "inconclusive."

"The expectation of a single great day of general resurrection, considered literally, and interpreted as a kind of final event in the temporal order, presents great difficulties."

"We ought to reject quite frankly the literalistic belief of a future resuscitation of the actual physical frame which is laid in the tomb."

"There is some reason to think that in some cases the words attributed to our Lord reflect rather the experience of the primitive Church, or the utterance of Christian prophets, rather than the actual words of Jesus."

Such is the gist of the findings of the committees of leading churchmen after fifteen years' research. *They cannot accept the Virgin Birth of Jesus. They cannot accept all the words as accredited to Jesus. They cannot accept the General Resurrection. They frankly reject the resuscitation of the body. They cannot accept the Bible as inerrant.*

So much for the foundation of the dogmas of a now dying religion that the future generations will look back upon when wondering how such an intelligent people could have been so blind as to believe such priestly dogmas.

It is not necessary to recall the fact that religions have always, through their morality and their promises extending beyond the grave, exercised an enormous influence upon men's happiness, although we have seen some—and very important ones, such as paganism—which provided neither those promises nor any morality properly so-called.

"Religion, until our modern interpreters got to work upon it" said W. Macneile Dixon, Professor Emeritus of English Literature

at the University of Glasgow, in the Gifford lectures he delivered at that University, "rested upon the belief in another and a future world, with which our human destinies were somehow associated. If no such world exist, interest in religion is, to my mind, of much the same order as an interest in the geography of Gulliver's travels, or the tribal customs of the Lilliputians. Religion has resigned in favour of ethics. In the eyes of most believers, to excise from Christian doctrine the hope of a life to come would be to extirpate its starry centre, its sublime expectation. I am not discussing the truth of Christian doctrine. I am speaking only of its interpretation. Is Christianity a religion for the stalls, and also a religion for the gallery, for the emancipated intellectuals, who take it in one sense, and the simple folk, who take it in quite another? Is there any doubt of the Christian promises? Is this much talked of better country a pious legend only, a pretty story for the children? What were the glad tidings which have brought comfort to so many millions of aching hearts? All men are not theologians or philosophers, and the question to which the simple folk desire an answer is as simple as themselves—Do the dead exist? If Christ's teaching gave no promise of individual life beyond the grave, His followers have been, one fears, sadly deceived, and the history of Christianity is the history of the greatest imposture ever practised upon suffering humanity. Christians may find philosophy a dangerous ally if it requires them to believe that, when St. Paul exclaimed, 'O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?' he was indulging in a false and windy rhetoric."

No doubt it is easy for us to discern the flimsiness of the logical foundation on which such high hopes were built. But drowning men clutch at straws, and we need not wonder that the early Christians, like ourselves, with death before them and a great love of life in their hearts, should not have stopped to weigh with too nice a hand the arguments that told for and against the prospect of human immortality. The reasoning that satisfied Saint Paul and has brought comfort to untold thousands of sorrowing Christians, standing by the deathbed or the open grave of their loved ones, was good enough to pass muster with ancient pagans, when they too bowed their heads under the burden of grief, and, with the candle of life burning low in the socket, looked forward into the darkness of the unknown.

We will not speak here of "Christian promises", for they were the first to perish with that faith, whereas the Christians are still living in the monuments erected by the morality born of that departing

faith. But we feel that, in spite of the supports of habit, these monuments are tottering over their heads. "The Churches," declared an English parson recently, "are dying on their feet."

Much of the evidence he brought forward could not be contradicted. Congregations have dwindled, the number of Sunday scholars has slumped, and no denomination dare take a census of church attendance in the great cities of England, and especially in London. Many churches, built by the faith, devotion and sacrifice of noble men and women, are now slip-carriages, and the momentum imparted a couple of generations ago is now almost exhausted ; with loud creaking they are coming to a standstill.

The truth is that changing philosophies and the increased knowledge now possessed by a great part of mankind, together with the upheavals produced in human affairs by two world wars, have put official Christianity into a difficult and indeed ridiculous position. The Anglican clergy, for instance, draw attention to the indifference and, indeed, wickedness which have produced the catastrophe of war, by bitterly pointing out that no more than four per cent. of the population of the British Isles are practising Christians and not one 'citizen' soldier in ten knows 'The Lord's Prayer'; at the same time they blazon the claim that this is a 'war for Christianity' and that everyone engaged in it is animated by a lively desire to preserve Christian ideals.

Whatever the statistics, the truth is that most Christians do not go to church. The Christians do not go to church because the Church has nothing to give them that they want. The functions once peculiar to the Church have been usurped or duplicated by more competent and effective agencies. And the essential mission of religion; that of inspiring human beings, enriching personality, stimulating action, and ennobling thought and motive, is lost in a dust-cloud of ancient history and dry rot.

The Church is less concerned with the pressing problems of here and now than with vague promises of future reward, and of a celestial intervention in our mundane affairs upon which experience teaches us to place little reliance. The kind of "religion" they offer is the preservation of symbols, doctrines and a philosophy largely without meaning in our modern world.

After a week's struggle for food and security, this is not enough to rout a man out of bed for an hour in a church to sing to the glory of God and to make prescribed motions. The simple truth is that,

gods have become too weak to support a pure morality. The idea of ethics independent of a God or gods popularised in Buddhism is the only rational religion which will be acceptable to people in these days of better education and increased knowledge.

It was the Hebrew race which gave to mankind the idea of a single universal Deity; it is probable that the more intelligent members of the Greek and Roman communities arrived at a similar conception independently; but in the case of the Hebrews, the whole people turned to monotheism and conceived a God with universal attributes. Their Jehovah was a God indeed. Nevertheless, He still possessed some of the characteristics of the bad old gods—He was jealous of His Godhood, and inclined to rather vindictive assaults upon those who disobeyed His will. It was only with the coming of Buddhism that love began to displace fear as the great motive force in man's religious life, and that the ethical conceptions of men began to be related to a code of human conduct which would be regarded as valuable for its own sake.

Mr. W. E. Gladstone stated on one occasion that "the name of Jehovah is encircled in the heart of every believer with the profoundest reverence and love." Why? Because he is the Christian God, and he went on to say that "the Christian religion teaches through the Incarnation a personal relation so lofty that it can only be approached in a deep reverential calm." Gladstone was an orthodox Christian, a believer in the creeds and dogmas of the Christian Church, and realised quite clearly that Jehovah is inextricably bound up with the Christian religion. Jehovah was the God Jesus worshipped, and of whom Christians believe Jesus was and still is a part.

Men have always clung to the idea of a personal, living God. They have put the responsibility of life on a God, because without a faith in their own race and a love for one another to sustain them, they cannot do without Him. Their lives would become meaningless without Him, and because death is so near, and because it is a terrible thing to feel that the end of one's personal life is the end of everything that has made one's life dear, men have sacrificed their peace of mind to a craving for immortality. They cling to an anthropomorphic conception of God, a being like themselves, feeling and willing and desiring as they do, all-powerful and therefore able to carry them to their conception of everlasting bliss, because without this comforting assurance life becomes a terrible and apparently insoluble mystery; and, further, men are

thrown upon their own resources—life becomes what they choose to make it, a heaven or hell. The way to heaven on earth is hard and difficult. It demands hard thinking, co-operation amongst peoples of different races and outlook, the sinking of personal and social prejudices for the sake of the common good, a rejection of selfish desires on the part of those in power. It is easier to believe than to do.

Despite temporary regressions and stagnation, the history of Man has displayed a constant upward spiral. Some day the human race will awaken to the glorious truth, first expressed by Confucius, that “the kingdom of heaven is within you,” and that deeds are the vital thing—not belief.

Chapter V

IDEALS OF SOCIETY

“ When the Guide of the World, having accomplished the salvation of mankind and having reached the utmost stage of blissful rest, was lying on his deathbed, in the midst of the great assembly of gods, He, the great Sage, the greatest of those who have speech, spoke to Sakra who stood there near him: “ Vijaya, son of King Sinha Bahu is come, from the country of Lala, to Lanka together with seven hundred followers and will assume its sovereignty. In Lanka, O lord of gods, will my religion be established and endure for full five thousand years, therefore protect with zeal the prince and his followers and Lanka and the Doctrine.

—MAHAVAMSA COMMENTARY

(1) *Material and Spiritual Forces*

MAN's material welfare is the product of three things, and three things only: natural resources, human energy (muscular and mental) and equipment. The level of the material welfare of any society can be measured by the quantity and quality of its natural resources, the quality and quantity of its human energy, and the quantity and quality of the tools that multiply the productivity of that human energy.

We cannot make any important changes in the quantity or quality of our natural resources; we cannot substantially change the quantity or quality of our muscular and mental energy. Therefore it is principally by changing the quantity and quality of our equipment that we can improve our productivity and, thereby, our material welfare.

Our species, man, in the widest sense, has succeeded in surviving and multiplying chiefly by improving his equipment for living, as Gordon Childe has explained at length in *Man Makes Himself*. As with other animals, it is chiefly through his equipment that man acts on and reacts to the external world, draws sustenance therefrom and escapes its perils—in technical language, adapts himself to his environment, or even adjusts his environment to his needs. Man's equipment, however, differs significantly from that of other animals. These carry their whole equipment about with them as parts of their bodies; the rabbit carries paws to dig with, the lion claws and teeth for tearing its prey, the beaver its tusks, most beasts either hairy or furry coats to keep them in warmth, and the tortoise even carries his house on his back. Man has very

little equipment of this sort and has discarded some that he started with in prehistoric times. It is replaced by tools, extra-corporeal organs that he makes, and uses and discards at will; he makes picks and shovels for digging, weapons for killing game and enemies, adzes and axes for cutting wood, clothing to keep him warm in cold weather, and houses of wood, brick or stone to provide shelter.

As with other animals, there is of course a bodily physiological basis to man's equipment. It may be summed up in two words—hands and brain. Relieved of the burden of carrying our bodies, our forefeet have developed into delicate instruments capable of an amazing variety of subtle and accurate movements. To control the latter, and to link them up with impressions from outside, received by the eye and other sense organs, we have become possessed of a peculiarly complicated nervous system and an exceptionally big and complicated brain.

The detachable and extra-corporeal character of the rest of human equipment has obvious advantages. It is more convenient and more adaptable than other animals' equipment. The latter fits its possessor for living in a particular environment, under special conditions. The mountain hare passes the winter comfortably and safely on the snow-clad hills, thanks to his changeable coat; he would be dangerously conspicuous in the warmer valleys. Men can discard their warm clothing if they move to a hotter climate and can adjust their costume to the landscape. A rabbit's paws are good digging tools, but cannot compete with a cat's as weapons; while feline paws are poor spades. Men can make both tools and weapons. In brief, an animal's hereditary equipment is adapted to performing a limited number of operations in a particular environment. Man's extra-corporeal equipment can be adjusted to an almost infinite number of operations in almost any environment.

As against these advantages man has to learn not only to use but also to make his equipment. A chick soon finds itself equipped with feathers, wings, beak and claws. It certainly has to learn their use—how, for instance, to keep its feathers clean. But this is very simple and will not take long. A human infant arrives with no such outfit and it will not grow spontaneously.

Even the simplest tool made out of a broken bough, or a chipped stone, is the fruit of long experience—of trials and errors, impressions noticed, remembered and compared. The skill to make it has been acquired by observation, by recollection and by experiment. Happily the individual infant is not left to accumulate

in its own person the requisite experience, or itself to make all the trials and mistakes. A baby is born heir to a social tradition. Its parents and elders will teach it how to make and use equipment in accordance with the experience gathered by ancestral generations. And the equipment it uses is itself just a concrete expression of this social tradition. A tool is a social product and man is a social animal.

Now in human, as in animal, societies the elder generations transmit by example to the younger the collective experience accumulated by the group—what they in turn have learned, in like fashion, from their elders and parents. Animal education can all be done by example ; a chick learns how to peck, and what to peck at, by copying the hen. For human infants who have so much to learn, the imitative method would be fatally slow. In human societies, instruction is by precept as well as by example. Human societies have gradually devised tools for communication between their members. In so doing they have brought forth a new sort of equipment which can conveniently be labelled *spiritual*.

The term "idea" is generally used for what words and other symbols denote, mean, or refer to. In a sense "mango" does not refer to anything you can see, touch, smell, or even eat, but only to an idea—the "ideal mango." Still this idea is happily represented by plenty of substantial edible mangoes even if none of them quite comes up to the standard of the ideal mango. But in society men make names for and talk about ideas which cannot in fact be seen, smelt, handled or tasted like mangoes—ideas such as the Sinhalese Lion, the Unicorn and the two-headed eagle, electricity, cause. All these are social products like the words that express them. Societies behave as if they stood for real things. In fact men seem to be impelled to far more strenuous and sustained action by the idea of the Sinhalese Lion, immortality or freedom than by the most succulent mangoes !

In practice ideas form as effective an element in the environment of any human society as do mountains, trees, animals, the weather and the rest of external nature. Societies, that is, behave as if they were reacting to a spiritual environment as well as to material environment. To deal with this spiritual environment they behave as if they needed a spiritual equipment just as much as they need a material equipment of tools.

This spiritual equipment is not confined to ideas which can be and are, translated into tools and weapons that work successfully in controlling and transforming external nature, nor yet to language

which is the vehicle for ideas. It includes also what is often termed society's ideology—its superstitions, religious beliefs, juridical systems, loyalties, intellectual trends and artistic ideals. Apparently by pursuit of ideologies, and inspired by ideas, men perform actions of a kind never observed among other animals. At least 50,000 years ago those strange-looking creatures, termed Neanderthal men, ceremonially buried their wives, children and relatives, and provided them with food and tools. Every known human society today, however savage, performs rites—often quite painful. The motives for, and stimuli to, these actions today, and presumably in the past too, are socially sanctioned ideas of the sort denoted by our words "karma," "rebirth," "God," "devil," "soul," "immortality." Such actions are strange to the rest of the animal kingdom, presumably because brutes do not use a language symbolism, and hence cannot form such abstract ideas.

Flints over a hundred thousand years old seem to have been fashioned with more care and delicacy than was requisite for mere utilitarian efficiency. It looks as if their authors had wanted to make an implement that was not only serviceable but also beautiful. More than 15,000 years ago people began painting their bodies and hanging round their necks shells and beads, made with considerable labour. Today we find women painting their lips and nails, deforming their bodies with corsets, or submitting to some other mutilation in obedience to the dictates of fashion. Such behaviour again seems peculiar to the human species. It results from, and gives expression to, an ideology.

So, with the aid of abstract ideas, men have evolved and have come to need new stimuli to action beyond the universal urges of hunger, sex, anger and fear. And these new ideal motives come to be necessary for life itself. An ideology, however remote from obvious biological needs, is found in practice to be biologically useful; that is, favourable to the survival of the species. Without such spiritual equipment societies invariably tend to disintegrate, and the individuals composing them just stop bothering to keep alive. The "destruction of religion" among primitive peoples is always cited by experts as a major cause in their extinction when in contact with white civilization.

The whole story of the impact of white civilization on "native races" is one of the most unrelieved shame and criminality. The wiping out of native cultures—by the Portuguese in Ceylon, the Dutch in Ceylon and Indonesia, the British in India, Ceylon and Burma, the Russians in Siberia, the Spaniards in South and Central

America, the Anglo-Saxons in North America, the French in Morocco and Indo-China, the Italians in Libya—was spiritual murder, a more dastardly offence than mere killing. Many of the cultures wiped out were superior to those of their brutal destroyers. People claiming to be civilized have thus not only deluded themselves into mistaking “outward visible signs” for “inward spiritual grace,” but they have also forced this disastrous misconception on others who were unable to resist deception. We are not civilized because we have motor cars, aircraft, the telephone, radio, electric light and the cinema. These are but the trappings of civilization.

THE LAND, THE RACE AND THE FAITH

Throughout their history, the stimulus to action, for the Sinhalese, was the ideology that they were a nation brought into being for the definite purpose of carrying, “for full five thousand years,” the Torch lit by the “Guide of the World” twenty-five centuries ago; and the structure of Sinhalese society has been shaped in pursuance of this ideology. Buddhism was made the State religion. The chosen king was always a Buddhist, and the people supported him with whole-hearted loyalty, because he, as the chief citizen of the country, was the leader in shaping and sustaining their ideology and the protector of the national faith. The temple became the centre from which radiated learning, arts and culture. The Sangha were the guides of the king’s conscience and the mentors of the people, whose joys they shared and whose sorrows they assuaged.

Man can be induced to work consistently for the good of his fellow-men, and in harmonious co-operation with them, only by participation in the life of an enduring organized group—a group that has a long history, in which he may take pride, and an indefinitely long future on which he may fix his larger hopes. Identification of the individual with such a group is the only way in which the mass of mankind can be brought to live consistently on a plane of altruistic effort and public-spirited endeavour, observing high standards of social conduct such as must be accepted and must prevail in any community, if it is to flourish on a high plane, if it is to maintain and develop a culture worthy in any sense to be called civilization.

The Sinhalese, throughout all the vicissitudes of their fortunes, had fixed their “larger hopes” on the ideology of carrying the Torch for five thousand years. It was this ideology that inspired five hundred bhikkhus to accompany Dutugemunu in his march

to liberate the country from an alien ruler. It was the same ideology that inspired Mahanama Thero to compose the *Mahāvamsa* ; Vidagama Maha Thero to restore the Vijayan dynasty by placing on the throne Parakrama Bahu VI of Kotte ; Ratnalankara Thero, the architect of the Kandyan Kingdom, to lead the rebellion against Rajasinha I of Sitawaka ; Wariyapola Nayaka Thero to protest against the hoisting of the British flag over the Kandyan Kingdom ; Kandapola Thero to face an execution squad in front of the Temple of the Sacred Tooth ; Migettuvatte Thero to challenge the Christian missionaries to the Panadura Controversy ; and Anagarika Dharmapala, the crusader, to restore Buddha Gaya to the Buddhists, to rouse the bhikkhus and Sinhalese to action. This same ideology will be the stimulus to action for the Sinhalese for the next two thousand five hundred years also. Any other ideology, whether it is that of a Party of Marxists or Republicans or reformers whose goal is Dominion Status, is incapable of inspiring the nation to action, in the way of raising their lives above the animal plane of self-seeking or of merely family altruism, as compared with the ideology of "Five thousand years of the Land, the Race and the Faith."

The Buddha's blessing of Vijaya and his band of followers and the land which they "went forth to possess," foreshadowed an intimate connection between the Race, the Land and the Faith. The Faith gave to the Land a culture of her own and to the Race a stimulus to action. T. S. Eliot, in his book *Notes towards the Definition of Culture*, argues that a culture cannot come into being, or maintain itself, without a religious basis. In the abstract he would admit that such a religion need not necessarily be Christianity, but, given the historical situation in Europe, he argues that it must be Christianity. He does not "overlook the possibility that Britain, if it consummated its apostasy by reforming itself according to the prescriptions of some inferior materialistic religion, might blossom into a culture more brilliant than we can show today." But "that would not be evidence that the new religion was true, and Christianity was false. It would merely prove that any religion, while it lasts, and on its own level, gives an apparent meaning to life, provides the framework for a culture, and protects the mass of humanity from boredom and despair."

The advent of Western adventurers in Ceylon disrupted the pursuit of the ideals of the Sinhalese. The destruction of the temples, the relegation of the Sangha to the background, the replacement of the national king with an alien one professing an alien religion,

have been among the root causes of the decay and deterioration of the Sinhalese race. "The century of British rule over Ceylon," declared Lord Soulbury, the Governor-General of Ceylon in a recent speech, "seriously disrupted the threads of her national life. The same thing has happened throughout history in almost every country that has fallen under alien control. It could scarcely be otherwise, for it is very hard for people of another race and climate to comprehend and value intimate and subtle features of thought and expression different from their own."

In the set-up of Ceylon as a "little bit of England," the Sinhalese found no stimulus to action beyond the universal urges of hunger, sex and anger, and the gift of Dominion Status was received with cold indifference and almost with resentment. Enormous sums were spent by the new rulers on "Independence" celebrations, to rouse enthusiasm among the people and as propaganda for the new set-up. The Duke of Gloucester was invited to be present in person on the occasion, to stand before the people as the representative of the new symbol of freedom. But it was a stonily silent, almost a sullen, people who received him. The manner in which they greeted the Duke's procession along the Colombo streets was devoid of those elements of spontaneous and excited rejoicing that should mark popular feeling in a celebration of freedom.

"In nature, an evolutionary process is difficult to reverse once it has gone too far." With the human species also the same law is true. The Sinhalese have been disciplined by a religion, the fundamentals of which—the denial of a Supreme Being, the soul and immortality—are even today accepted as scientific truths. The attempt, from Portuguese times, to convert them to a religion, the fundamentals of which are the reverse, and hence unacceptable to the Sinhalese, can only end in the disintegration of the race. The clamour of the missionaries that they are out to "win Ceylon for Jesus Christ," howsoever remote of realization, is not an objective favourable to the nation's survival. And Bishop Lakdasa de Mel really precipitated himself into the company of "brutal destroyers" when he declared that the task of the Church in Ceylon would not be finished till the remaining ninety per cent of the population were converted to Christianity.

LANKA'S NATIONAL ANTHEM

This attempt to reverse the ideals by which the Sinhalese had moulded and ordered their lives throughout the centuries, can be noticed in other fields, too. One is the clamour of some local

minority leaders for a new National Flag, and another is the search by some ignorant politicians for a National Anthem for Lanka. Politicians are seldom far-sighted, and their immediate concern is to retain, at any cost, a hold on their precarious power, and little do they reflect on the outcome of their actions. They are in conclave now, designing a new National Flag to replace the time-honoured Lion Flag of Lanka, with the avowed object of soothing the susceptibilities of the minorities, but with the ulterior motive of insinuating themselves into their favour.

The National Flag of Lanka attains a very high standard in heraldry. Aesthetically it can hold its own with any other as a compelling work of art; and any alteration in its design or colour will be disastrous, since it would be the mutilation of the treasured symbol of an age-old ideology. A National Flag is not only a combination of pattern and colour, such as anybody could easily make to please himself, but one that has been hallowed by tradition and cherished by a people throughout their history. There is no flag in the world with traditions so ancient as the Lion Flag. Why then should so rare a treasure be denuded of its historical significance and associations, and wantonly be made to subserve present political needs? It should be allowed to survive whole for our posterity, as it has survived the vicissitudes of many stormy centuries. The minorities, who have made this country their home, share with us this land in common, and we all live in complete amity and mutual goodwill, united as one nation. Why then should not the minorities accept the Lion Flag, without any disfigurement, as the symbol of our common unity?

And why this search for a National Anthem for Ceylon? Though few know it, we have had one from the earliest times, and, no doubt, like most of our finest ancient institutions, it was given to us by the Sangha. This National Anthem of ours is one that any nation could be proud of, and it has none of the irrelevant sentiments associated with the Anthems produced recently and foisted upon the people. Conquerors come and conquerors go; politicians rise and politicians fall; but the Sangha, the guardians of the nation, will continue. It is the Sangha which has preserved Lanka's National Anthem for us. They continue to use it to this very day, and every important occasion is brought to a close by them with the chanting of:

*Devo vassatu kālena,
Sassa-sampatti-hetu ca,
Phīto bhavatu loko ca,
Rājā bhavatu dhammiko.*

May there be rain in season,
To yield a rich harvest,
May the world be prosperous,
And may the rulers be righteous !

Is there any National Anthem in the entire world so refined and rational as this one ? In the opening line itself it gets to the core of the business of a National Anthem and reaches to the problem of national prosperity. The entire well-being of our country is irrevocably linked up with Nature, and with the rhythm that governs life on the land ; and that rhythm which governs the contentment and happiness of Lanka is the rhythm of the seasons. Besides which, what higher wish is there that the people could desire ? It is only a people that had reached a very high level of culture that could have conceived of such a National Anthem as ours. It does not call upon God to vanquish one's enemies, but invokes righteousness amongst rulers and prosperity for all mankind.

How far a nation's ideology has modified religion is an interesting speculation. Whatever the ideal may be, we have unfortunately ample proof that the most civilized countries have not succeeded, in practice, in getting much beyond the primitive conception of the tribal god. The Englishman calls upon his Christian God to vanquish the enemies of his king, while those enemies appeal to the same God to do likewise. All rather distressing, but perhaps not altogether strange.

Societies of men "cannot live by bread alone." But if every word that sanctified morality, or, as the Christian would say, "proceedeth out of the mouth of God," does not directly or indirectly promote the growth, the biological and economic prosperity of the society that sanctified them, that society, and its God with it, will vanish ultimately. It is this natural selection that guarantees that *in the long run* the ideals of a society are "just translations and inversions in men's minds of the material."

The ancient Sinhalese were taught by their teachers not to look for happiness here and now in this present existence, but to utilize this life—one very rarely obtained by beings for ever tossed on the ocean of Samsara—as a stepping-stone to a future existence in a hypothetical heaven. This erroneous teaching made the Sinhalese to expend their mental and muscular energies in rearing up stupendous religious edifices for the acquirement of posthumous merit, and to neglect the military equipment of the State—a policy which

eventually resulted in leaving the nation a prey to foreign conquerors. It is from the standpoint of the social group that an ideology is judged by historical selection.

An ideology is evidently a social product. Not only are the words which support its ideas produced by life in society and unthinkable apart from it ; but such ideas, too, owe their reality, their power to influence action, to their acceptance by society. Seemingly absurd beliefs can win and maintain credence, provided every member of the group could accept them and is taught to believe in them from childhood. It will never occur to any one to question a belief so universally held. Few of us have any better grounds for believing in germs than for believing in devils. Intelligent society inculcates the former belief and ridicules the latter, but other societies reverse the judgments. Of course, a number of acknowledged experts have seen germs under the microscope. But still more experts, in Ceylon and elsewhere, have seen devils functioning. The superiority of our belief is in the long run established, if antiseptics and vaccines succeed better in preventing deaths, and so permitting social growth, than do incantations and devil-dancings.

We owe to Marx and Engels a view of ideology that is widely accepted today and would be defended by many who are not "Marxists", if science were excluded from ideology. Indeed, when some Catholic apologists argue that the causes of the Reformation were more economic than theological, they echo Marx. When Egyptologists, like Breasted, argue that ancient monotheism was a reflection of ancient imperialism, they confirm one part of the Marxian thesis. It would be tedious to multiply instances.

According to Engels: "Ideology is a process which, of course, is carried on with the consciousness of so-called thinkers, but with a false consciousness. The real driving force which moves it remains unconscious, otherwise it would not be an ideological process. It imaginatively creates for itself false or apparent driving forces." From this it would appear that since Marxism claims to be a science, it must be exempt from the self-deception that it exposes. And it would seem that the theories of such exact sciences as physics and chemistry must also be exempt.

It is, of course, possible to hold, without being a Dialectical Materialist, that Marx said many wise and important things about economics and sociology. One need not be a Marxist to believe that he was substantially right when he argued that capitalism was

essentially unstable. But it was a remarkable achievement to have demonstrated this at a time when it looked to most people as though capitalism would last for ever.

Again, it showed astonishing insight to perceive that an ideology could be regarded as a function of the social structure. It was a most fruitful hypothesis, and as such it threw a new light on the rediscovery of the past that gained such pace in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Its importance to the theory of religious origins was missed by the majority of Marx's rationalist contemporaries.

One can accept a great deal of what Marx had to say about the actual world, however, without accepting the scheme that he formulated. But the modern dialectical materialist objects to this procedure. He is scornful of those who accept some parts of Marxism and reject others. He regards even science itself as an ideology and for several reasons. In the first place, if the concepts used by science are social products, then they must be modified by their social environment. In a capitalist society they will be contaminated by the false thinking that capitalism generates. In a Socialist society they will be less contaminated, and in a Communist society there will be an even purer approximation to truth. Thus bourgeois science cannot compete with Marxian science, for the dialectic opens the only door to an undistorted knowledge.

The attitude of modern dialectical materialists towards science is lucidly stated by Christopher Caudwell in *The Crisis in Physics*. He affirms unambiguously that scientific theories are part of an ideology. "The categories of science, or 'things seen,' always reflect in a class society the particular conditions of functioning of the working class....The categories of mind—of philosophy, art, and mystical religion—always reflect in a class society the particular conditions of functioning of the ruling class as felt by them."

As long as men have beliefs, they will strive to protect and expand them. Ideas which involve human faith contain a militant crusading spirit. Christianity, the Divine Right of Kings, Mohammedanism, the Protestant Reformation, Liberalism, Marxism, Fascism and Nazism have all in their time marched with the sword. Now Evangelism is on the war-path in Ceylon. Bishops and parsons have openly and unequivocally declared that their avowed object is the destruction of the ideologies pursued by the Sinhalese; and ideological wars, whether religious or secular, are more cruel and more bitter than wars of mere conquest or exploitation.

If we scan the history of modern civilization, we can see that, following long periods of world wars and world disorder, new shapes and new forms of nations have emerged. Civilization has taken on new impulses and new directions. We must expect new forms and new directions from the gigantic explosion beginning in 1914. No one can pretend to see these coming shapes and forms clearly. We know that whatever forms evolve, ideological forces will have a part in their shaping.

(2) *Material Progress and Spiritual Stagnation*

NOT the least important function of an ideology is to hold society together and lubricate its workings. And in this guise at least ideology reacts on technology and material equipment. For, like spiritual equipment, material equipment is a social product and not only in the sense that it springs from social tradition. In practice, the production and use of tools also requires co-operation between members of a society. Today it is self-evident that modern societies get food, housing, clothing and satisfaction for other needs only as a result of the co-operation of a vast and highly complicated productive organization or economy. Cut off from this, we would be very uncomfortable and should probably starve. Theoretically "primitive man," with simpler wants and more rudimentary equipment, could shift for himself alone. In practice even the rudest savages live in groups organized to co-operate in getting food and preparing equipment, as well as in performing ceremonies. Among the Veddahs of Ceylon, for instance, we find a division of labour between the sexes in hunting and gathering, as well as in making implements. There is also a division of the product of this co-operative activity.

Even the student of material culture has to study a society as a co-operative organization for producing means to satisfy its needs, for reproducing itself—and for producing new needs. He wants to see its economy working. But its economy affects, and is affected by, its ideology. The "materialist concept of history" asserts that the economy determines the ideology. It is safer and more accurate to repeat in other words what has been stated already: in the long run an ideology can survive only if it facilitates the smooth and efficient functioning of the economy. If it hampers such a process, then society—and with it its ideology—must perish in the end. But the final reckoning may be long postponed. An

obsolete ideology can hamper an economy, and impede its change, far longer than Marxists would admit.

Ideologies find their most effective expression, not in logical propositions, but in suggestive symbols and slogans. In countries where the economy is controlled by the national State, the ideology of progress is symbolized by the Plan. "You may be wretched now, but our Six-Year, Ten-Year, n-Year Plan is positively guaranteed to bring future happiness in exchange for present misery." The symbols of the ideology of capitalist society are to be found in the advertising pages of the popular magazines. Here, for example, are the four members of the ideal family gazing rapturously, and in full colour, at their newly acquired ice-box, piano, radio set or automobile. They are having, the advertisers assure us, "the thrill of their lives." Every face is smiling, every dentition is perfect. The father is young, handsome, broad-shouldered; the mother looks as though she were modelling brassieres; the children are like angels. Cheeks glow, eyes sparkle, health radiates from every pore. And what an atmosphere of domestic happiness! How right-feeling, kindly-feeling and devoid of ill-will everybody is! What a civilization that has such people in it! And what mechanical gadgets that have created this new civilization and must inevitably, as they are improved, create ever newer and greater worlds inhabited by ever happier people!

Translated into cold prose, the message of this and all the other symbols of our mechanized world may be expressed in some such words as these: "All happiness, all virtue, all that has value in human life come not, as the Buddha and all the philosophers erroneously taught, from within, but from without, through changes in external circumstances. Radio sets and the techniques of organization are being improved; therefore, our children will be better and happier than their parents, while we ourselves, in spite of all appearances to the contrary, are happier and better than we used to be before radio and moving pictures were invented. Advances in technology can be actually experienced by individuals as a felt increase in personal well-being."

Now it is obviously true that the passage from anarchy to almost any kind of order, from general starvation to plenty for all, will be felt by every member of the community in question as a personal blessing. But where the advance is from a not intolerable condition to another that is only a little better, the direct experience of progress as an increase of personal happiness will be largely non-existent. There are two very simple reasons for this. The

first is that, physiologically speaking, human life is the very reverse of progressive. To an old man, whose friends are all dead, who is deaf and suffers from arthritis or high blood pressure, the fact that the local standard of living is twenty-five per cent higher than it was when he was a boy is only moderately consoling. In spite of the greater wealth and efficiency in the midst of which he lives, this man is in all probability a good deal less happy than he used to be in the bad old days when he was young and healthy.

In spite of this anti-progress within the organism, some people undoubtedly go on becoming happier and better to the end of their days. But these are the men and women who have learned something of that wisdom which the old philosophers declared to be more precious than rubies. In other words, personal progress takes place in the inner world, and is independent of advancing technology and the changes in external circumstances which it brings about. True human progress consists in increase of aesthetic, intellectual, and spiritual experience and satisfaction.

Of course, increase of control and of independence is necessary for the increase of these spiritual satisfactions; but the more or less measurable and objective control over, and independence of, external environment is now merely subsidiary mechanism serving as the material basis for the human type of progress; and the really significant control and independence apply to man's mental states—his control of ideas to give intellectual satisfaction, of form and colour or of sound to give aesthetic satisfaction, his independence of inessential stimuli and ideas to give the satisfaction of mystic detachment and inner ecstasy.

The civilization of the West, the civilization which churchmen and statesmen prefer to call the "Christian civilization," originated in Greece, travelled to Rome, was highly corrupted out there by the Empire, went underground in the darkness of the Middle Ages, was rediscovered in England and emigrated to the American colonies. The home of civilization in Europe has been torn to pieces. The torch first lighted in Athens is now, for good or ill, in the hands of the American people.

The United States can lead the free world, for a time anyway, on its own terms, and two choices are before it. It can follow the example of other newly rich empires of the past, which entered the world only to dominate it and fatten on its resources. Or it can enter the world to serve it and save it, serving and saving itself in the process.

The United States is the first dominant world power in history which, because of its own natural resources, has no need to control any other nation, which requires no foreign territory, nor reservoir of slave labour. History has never before presented such a clear opportunity for the physically greatest world power to become also its greatest moral power.

Assuming that the United States will use its leadership for the benefit of the world, and not to establish an American empire, there still remains the question of American morality. This will overshadow every other question, because the paramount issue of humanity in our time is a moral, not a political or economic one.

The American people are the first who have ever had the chance of general prosperity, of ample goods for everybody. In the past, such an opportunity has been confined to a few small areas of the world and to a few privileged classes. The American people possessed half a continent, replete with nearly all essential resources, at the moment when invention made it possible to convert these resources into goods and equipment. By this unique combination they have built the highest standard of living ever known, and this they have called the Pursuit of Happiness.

But the world's highest standard of living has not produced the highest standard of happiness. Many poorer nations are far happier; and by all the indexes of American life—by its literature, by its crime, by its divorce rate, by its desperate efforts to escape the reality of its life through a huge and shallow industry of entertainment, by the restlessness and discontent which sends people hurtling over its highways away from home—we can see that the Pursuit of Happiness has not succeeded.

The reason is not difficult to find. Instead of seeking happiness within, the American people have been dazzled by the paraphernalia of outer happiness, the glittering, thin satisfactions of unexampled luxury, which threaten to drug them. Former President Herbert Hoover, in lightsome vein, once said that "the aspiration, of the American people seem to have advanced from two chickens in every pot to two cars in every garage." Some Republicans adopted this as a serious slogan. Today the chief drive of American life and politics is to create more things, in the belief that they will create better men. The philosophy preached by each political party, by every successful politician, by business and by labour, holds that if enough goods are produced and distributed all the ills of human life will be cured.

The conquest of self has been interpreted to mean the conquest of Nature and the provision of material conveniences. The search for truth has become for millions a search for a new kind of bath-tub, rather like the one Caligula used in Rome just before the unwashed barbarians arrived. The gods currently worshipped closely resemble the Roman deities, which were then created by the Senate and are now created by Hollywood.

The American conviction that progress is to be measured by the increase of material conveniences and creature comforts is an idea that is very important in their national life. An insistent and expensive advertising campaign has connected it with the calendar; the average American is apparently convinced that all mechanical contrivances automatically improve every three hundred and sixty-five days, and under the spell of this illusion he has bought millions of cars and radios and refrigerators which he did not need, to the profit of those who fostered the illusion.

The idea of progress is one of America's great national investments. The amount of money spent in the schools, in the newspapers, and on the radio to protect it exceeds computation. It is part and parcel of "boosting," of that mass optimism which has made the Americans, for good and evil, what they are today. Nothing is more treasonable to the basic American spirit than to doubt that they have improved and are improving—every day in every way.

And, for reasons which the social historian can perhaps explain, the bath-tub has become an especial symbol not only of their material progress but of their spiritual progress as well. For the Americans set great store by things of the spirit. Nothing is more warmly rejoiced in than their superiority to the grimy Europeans in the matter of bath-tubs. Cleanliness is far ahead of godliness.

No argument against public housing has been used more consistently than the assertion that if you give bath-tubs to the poor, they will only dump coal in them. To point out that most housing projects are centrally heated and supplied with gas and electricity so that their occupants have no need of coal, is to earn the reproach of being frivolous. It is absolutely "known" that all occupants of housing projects put coal in their bath-tubs. And their so doing indicates such depravity that to build houses for them is practically contributing to moral delinquency. The poor have been weighed in the bath-tub and been found wanting.

To the Americans the standard of living appears to be their ideal of life, the answer to every riddle, the secret to happiness. But the standard of living is only the first beginning of a true

standard of life. Prosperity is useful only if it creates a climate in which the happiness of the mind and spirit can grow, but generally, in all past civilizations, this happiness has withered just about the time prosperity began to appear.

No Golden Age lasts long, says Haverfield in his *Roman Britain*. The happiest period of the British, the Victorian Age, lasted only sixty-three years. "No one yet knows," writes Professor Burkitt, "why the Roman Empire fell." "If you want to know why the Roman Empire fell, read Finlay," wrote John Morley. There is another, that caustic comment of Scott's when he came on board ship after seeing Knossos in Crete: "The moral of Knossos is that good plumbing will not save a civilization."

Whether the "savages" of the past were as "happy" as the people of today, there is no means of judging. We have more conveniences, more diversions, more delicacies; they had better health and greater contentment. We should say the amount of happiness among men is a constant. Sometimes there is more of this, sometimes more of that. The total does not vary much, at any rate in civilized communities. For the civilized, if they are not plagued with real troubles, plague themselves by inventing artificial ones. Civilization cannot rightly be called either a boon or a bane. It may be made either. All depends on the use that is made of it. But it does seem that so far it has not been used with much wisdom, seeing that all civilizations have destroyed themselves.

The earth is the grave of civilizations. They embodied the achievements of Man in society over roughly 8,000 years, and all alike are extinct. Some have left only fragmentary remains, while others have excited the modern mind by wonders of architecture and public works, literature, and evidences of skill and social amenity. Professor Arnold Toynbee makes a list of something over twenty vanished systems, and in his ambitious *Study of History* he discusses at length the various theories concerning their decline and dissolution.

First among these is the concept of an inevitable cycle, the assumption that the biological law of growth, maturity, and decay must be applied as inexorably to societies, however extensive and elaborate, as to the individual organism. This theory was elaborated afresh by the late Oswald Spengler in *The Decline of the West*. Spengler did much more than adopt the cycle. He argued that it was possible, in a given case, to mark the stage reached in the decline by examining the phenomena of governments, economics, and culture. As developed by Spengler, the theory is the bleakest

pessimism, for, while the cycle force in society, as in Nature and common life, is undeniable, the mind refuses to believe in an all-inclusive predestination.

It is not difficult to enumerate causes which have been powerful agencies of destruction. Among these are continental changes of climate, drought, pestilence and the destruction by Man of the bases of life, as in deforestation and systematic exhaustion of the soil.

Toynbee, again, gives importance to loss of command over the environment, which is plainly to be seen in the failures of the Greek City-States and, still more, in the complex troubles throughout the Empire which accompanied the prolonged decline of Rome. With this powerful cause of disintegration, he suggests, we may well consider "the intractability of institutions," the clinging to "semi-dead tissues of the social body"—in a word, political and social conservatism.

Gibbon put the Christian religion and the barbarian invasions high among the causes that were destructive of Rome, and it is manifestly impossible to confute him. Nor need we contest one of Toynbee's more emphatic assertions—namely, as to history's overwhelming demonstration that they who take the sword shall perish by the sword. War and conquest are the supreme enemies of civilization. From the deadly consequences of greed and aggression, there is no escape.

Historian Gibbon was not the only eminent scholar to view Christianity as a menace to civilization. Anthropologist Sir James Frazer, the author of *The Golden Bough*, regretted that the "unselfish ideal" of Greek and Roman society, which subordinated the individual to the welfare of the State, was superseded by the "selfish and immoral doctrine" of "Oriental religions which inculcated the communion of the soul with God and its eternal salvation as the only objects worth living for. . . ." The result, said Frazer, was "a general disintegration of the body politic."

Toynbee also discusses, in the light of history, the crisis which has arisen because Man has achieved control of Nature before achieving control of himself. He looks back to the rise and fall of other civilizations, and declares that one lesson runs through history: "Nothing fails like worldly success."

Civilizations, like individuals, become besotted by it, and the particular form of worldly success which they are most prone to idolize is that of technical efficiency. Blinded by worship of

their past successes, they fail to meet a new crisis with a new and creative response. So—they fall.

At each decisive moment of history, he maintains there comes a moral choice. And, looking back over the vanished civilizations he has studied, Professor Toynbee is not sanguine about man's ability to choose wisely now—if he persists in omitting spiritual values.

If civilization, as we know it, is to continue at all, then it will have to be built on ideals more enduring than those of mere material abundance. Civilization cannot be built to last on the theory of two cars in every garage, for such a civilization will be no better than a Hollywood scenic set, with the glitter of chorus girls in front of it and nothing behind it. The paramount question is not whether we can solve the political and economic problems of the world, but whether we can solve the problem of our own life, the problem of finding inner happiness in a world clamouring for luxury which has invariably sapped and destroyed all groups of men who enjoyed luxury in the long past.

“ CIVILIZED ” MAN THE SPENDTHRIFT

Let us pass to another line of enquiry, the all-important matter of what may be called Cosmic Costs. In its popular form the ideology of progress is based upon the enormous fallacy that it is possible to get something for nothing. But this happens to be a world where everything, with the exception of charity, has to be paid for. In every field of human activity, gains and advances are always at a price. Sometimes the price is relatively low ; in other cases it is so high that immediate advantages are actually outweighed by the disadvantages they bring in their train. In agriculture and forestry, in industry and the exploitation of mineral resources, we have been making the kind of progress that can be measured in terms of quantities produced and cash received. But, as the conservationists are never tired of pointing out, we have been making that progress at the expense of Nature, making it at the ruinous cost of accelerating soil exhaustion and the squandering, in a few brief generations, of irreplaceable resources.

Impregnated with life, the soil is a medium in which constant changes are ever being initiated. Far from being the inert material it is oftentimes considered to be, it is a living, teeming, seething, ever-changing mass. The give and take of innumerable forces

of a highly organised character, obeying the blind impulse of some immutable law, produces within its recesses the food for man's sustenance, and all things necessary for his welfare.

Good earth, from which we can grow the food we need, consists of a small layer of soil containing some mysterious quality of life we call fertility. To get anything to grow we require "top soil" or *humus*—which the dictionary defines as "a blackish-brown powder formed by the action of the air on animal or vegetable matter"; in other words, vegetable mould. Mere solid earth ten feet down will not grow anything. Some top soil will not grow anything today, and so we speak of fertile and unfertile lands.

History shows that even the most fertile land can become barren: it can, literally, die. One of the most vivid examples of this is the extinction of the great civilization that existed in ancient Lanka. History is filled with similar tragedies, and today the same process is going on in many other countries. The direct causes of soil erosion vary in diverse parts of the earth, but, in the main, the real cause, as has happened and is still happening in Ceylon, has been the misuse of the soil.

Here is another example of the way in which the Nature of Things makes us pay for our greatest triumphs. During the last century progress in certain branches of medicine was enormous. But so, too, as we are now beginning to discover, was the cost of that progress. Vast numbers of persons, who in the bad old days would have died in childhood, were enabled, thanks to progressive medicine, to reach maturity and even old age. Hence, among other reasons, the almost explosive growth of world population to a point where Malthus' nightmare has, for all but a minority of the human species, nearly come true. While world fertility goes down, world population goes up at the rate of fifty thousand a day. But if most of our present two thousand million human beings cannot get enough to eat, what will be the fate of the three thousand millions who are destined to inhabit the depleted earth fifty years from now?

There is the answer to the long-range question already propounded:—Will the earth become over-populated? Though experts may quibble about the accuracy of the theory that population has a tendency to increase faster than food, 'Nature her custom holds.' Peoples are becoming more numerous all the time. In 1876, the world population was 1,424,000,000, while the last estimate puts the present total at 2,200,000,000.

The ability of the human race to expand and survive is limited by the output of 13,000,000,000 tillable acres, of which two-fifths are now under cultivation. As it takes two and a half acres to support one person, save for a revolution in food production or some means of synthetic sustenance the globe is capable of sustaining only 5,000,000,000 people. This number will be reached in less than than 200 years. What is the remedy ?

Professor Ross makes this suggestion: "Nature offers her solution—simple, ruthless, effective. When food can no longer keep up with population, privation and toil will raise the death rate as they have raised it a thousand times in the past until Life and Death are once more in the balance....If posterity recoils from this gloomy prospect, then the voluntary restriction of increase must become general."

Another field in which we have had to pay a heavy price for our technological progress is that of individual and social psychology. Thanks to applied science we can now live in skyscrapers, work at foolproof machines in hygienic factories, amuse ourselves effortlessly by turning on the radio—and so on. Moreover we have a longer expectation of life than did our ancestors, and a lower rate of infantile mortality and of infectious diseases. And how do we respond to these symptoms of progress ? By developing an unprecedented number of neuroses, allergies and psychoses ; by exhibiting a rapidly mounting incidence of such incapacitating psychosomatic disorders as peptic ulcer, asthma, cardio-vascular complaints, rheumatism, diabetes. As Dr. Halliday has pointed out in his recent *Psychosocial Medicine*, these psychosomatic disorders have now reached the proportions of a rapidly spreading epidemic.

The nations of the West are all "sick societies," disintegrating under the impact of an advancing technology that destroys the patterns of familial and communal living, cuts off man from contact with Nature, deprives him of opportunities for spontaneously creative activity, imposes upon his organism the clock-work rhythm of machines, and makes him think of the world and his fellows in mechanistic terms which are basically inappropriate to life and personality.

For most of the employed, interest has been taken out of their employment, which means out of their lives. Ruskin has dwelt on the charm of the task of the mediaeval craftsman, who felt the joy of work that had beauty and character. In modern industry there are no longer craftsmen making something they can be proud of.

Workers make single parts; they make these parts thousands of times a day. The process calls for very little use of intelligence. The worker feels no pleasure in his work, no artistic joy due to creation. "It is by his yearning for beauty, his capacity to create and design, his appreciation of form and colour, that man has shown himself so different from, so far from the animal, so near to the angel," said Lord Soulbury at the opening of the Exhibition of the Kandy Society of Arts recently.

"The love of art," the Governor-General added, "is a spiritual quality, and it is to be noted how often in history the best periods of a country's art have been closely associated with its religion. The wonderful work of the architects and builders and craftsmen of mediaeval Europe and mediaeval Ceylon bear testimony to that. They were able to draw their inspiration from a source which raised their achievements far above the level of day to day commerce.

"To combat the grave materialism of the present era, we need to give every possible encouragement to those possessing the creative ability of the artist, amongst whom there arise from time to time a few—a very few—individuals gifted with that divine spark which, in a mysterious momentary flash, reveals a glimpse of the ideal."

(3) *A Spiritual Balance*

PROGRESS is a moot point. Have we progressed? Technically, certainly, in our power over things. Thanks to the scientific method, we have more knowledge, and that is increasing hourly, formidably. Socially, there is less poverty, illness, drunkenness: there is more consideration for the under-dog. Social reform is in the air, and almost equally fashionable with all the political parties. Water is cheap, plumbing is good and cleanliness is the commonest of all the virtues. And yet one wonders whether fundamentally mankind is really better for all this material gain. We have the power, but not the wisdom to use it well. We lack a moral sense, in spite of our social progress and kindness to animals. The crime and torture, the burning and destruction of life and property, the wrecking of homes and the turning of men, women and children into wanderers in a wilderness, which has taken place in our own life-time—and been accepted as a matter of fact which may even shortly be repeated—has surely outstripped in magnitude of crime the darkest ages of world history.

Man's control over his own nature has not increased commensurately with his control over external nature, and that improvement in the quality of his life has as a result failed to keep pace with the improvement in his opportunities for living. In the last half century, the degree of man's control over himself has definitely diminished. One who looks back from the world of today will find it difficult to gainsay this view. Men today are crueller, more predatory and more unprincipled; they have less consideration for justice, less compassion for the helpless, less tenderness and less tolerance than they had fifty years ago. What is the reason for this recession?

There has been a vast increase in human power, and consequently a vast release of human energy, but there has been no proportionate increase in ethical insight. To make good the deficiency, men have embraced the worship of the State and the philosophy of militarism, which combine to ensure that power shall be used in the most destructive way. Evolution there must be, but there is no need for the methods of that evolution to be war, revolution, and violence. Mankind has other capacities for solving problems of development, however difficult they may seem, and it is these capacities which distinguish him, or should distinguish him, from the brute beast.

It is at this point that Buddhism offers itself as an alternative. Although the Buddhist way of life still embodies an ethical creed far in advance of the world's development today, it does offer in the present anarchy of ethics a creed to live for, and a principle to live by. The creed is Righteousness, translated to the ideal of the Brotherhood of Man; the principle, Justice. The measure of that justice is the good of humanity, and not the good of this or that section, class, or nation. Buddhism is a doctrine of the brotherhood of all men. Frontiers of nationality, race, religion or colour have no place in it. We cannot claim to be enlightened or tolerant if our virtues extend only as far as the members of our own family, creed or race.

Jawaharlal Nehru, in his *Mahatma Gandhi*, says how hurt he was when he first learned that the Pope had refused to interview Gandhiji when he was returning from the Round Table Conference in December, 1931. That refusal had seemed to him an affront to India, and there could be no doubt that the refusal was intentional: "The Catholic Church does not approve of Saints or Mahatmas outside its fold, and because some Protestant churchman had called Gandhiji a great man of religion

and a real Christian, it became all the more necessary for Rome to dissociate itself from this heresy." The Catholic Church has created a vested interest in sainthood, and it does neither "approve of saints outside its fold" nor recognise righteousness outside its own creed: it prefers to worship saints in stained glass windows rather than living ones.

Hardly a person will be found today who will deny the brotherhood of man as a sound moral, ethical, or religious basis for judgment. The Buddhist faith definitely lays it down that we should regulate our relationships on that footing. If we are right in the foregoing diagnosis of the causes of our ethical bankruptcy, this creed and the principle which it enshrines have a topical relevance, have, in fact, an urgency of a quite peculiar kind.

For it is the worship of the State which, in the absence of such a creed, is accepted as its substitute, just as it is the power of the State, resulting from such worship, which threatens our civilization with destruction. Thus the ethics of Buddhism prescribe the duty of enlarging the sentiments of brotherhood and patriotism, which now embrace the welfare only of those who are of the same creed and who are born within the same territorial area as oneself, to cover a wider horizon. For, once it be admitted that it is the individual's duty to subordinate his interests to those of a larger whole, and to sacrifice prejudices and comfort and happiness to the good of others, then there can be no logical reason for not extending these sentiments to all mankind.

When the day comes when men of all creeds and colours accept as their religion the common brotherhood of man and obey the Buddhist teaching that they should love one another and hold as their highest ideal the continuous search for, and love of, truth, mankind will be well on the way to the millennium.

There is no sphere in which the gulf between the quality of our technical accomplishment and the nature of the uses to which it is put is so marked as in that of religion—so marked indeed that at times it seems as if man's sense of purpose and value in the world declines as his power over the world grows. The suggestion we make is that Buddhism is the bridge that can be thrown across the gulf.

The connection between the State and Religion arises in this way. Religion may be advocated, not only as a means of averting war, but as a means of preserving liberty. The modern State is an enemy to liberty, and, while continually asserting its independence, deprives its citizens of theirs, treating them not as ends

in their own right, but as instruments to the ends which it imposes upon them. With its prisons and concentration camps for the confinement of men's bodies, its censorship and laws against sedition for the stifling of their minds, the State impedes that development of the free personality which it exists to promote. Nor, while the State retains its powers, will the individual ever again enjoy the liberty to vote as he pleases, to speak and to write as he pleases, and to hear the words and to read the writings of others.

Now it has become open to serious question whether democracy can be maintained in the modern world, except it be regarded as a corollary of religion. When the foundation of ethical and religious principle began to crumble, one of the first and most noticeable effects was the destruction of democratic forms and individual liberties. It is no accident that the decline of Christianity should have coincided with a monstrous invasion of the rights of man. Could the totalitarian regime of Spain and of those behind the Iron Curtain have successfully imposed their claims upon the bodies and minds of their members, save in the twilight of Christianity?

If you look back into the history of modern civilization, you will find that our finest institutions were primarily moulded by ideals of righteousness and justice such as those which Buddhism inculcates. But as peoples gained increasing power over their material environment, they have lost, in the process, many of these qualities. There is not among those in high office the same conscious sense of duty which prevailed in earlier days; and there is not among peoples the same sense of duty to their fellow men. For we must remember that freedom cannot exist unless the individuals who possess it have the qualities of self-control, self-restraint and self-sacrifice which alone make freedom tolerable.

During the past 30 years, we have seen a new power rise to great eminence in the world—the Soviet State. How has that come about? The power of the Soviet Union, and particularly of the Soviet Communist Party, is due to the fact that, while in a sense the Soviet State has moved into a power vacuum in Europe and Asia, the Soviet Communist Party has moved into a moral vacuum in the world.

What has given Soviet Communism its tremendous influence over men everywhere? It is the moral slogans which the Marxists have adopted. They profess to stand for an end of economic

exploitation of man by man. They profess to stand for the equitable sharing of the wealth of a country amongst all its citizens. They profess to stand for an end of colonial exploitation. They profess to stand for the dignity of the individual, irrespective of caste, colour and race.

Their slogans are nothing but an expression of the same principles for which religion has stood. But recognizing that religion had failed to stand militantly for those ideals, the leaders of Soviet Communism took them over and professed them to the world as the principles for which Marxism stood. The leaders of the Soviet Communist Party have been shrewd enough to see that the way to obtain influence in the world is to sponsor great moral principles, although they themselves do not necessarily conform to these principles in practice.

Democracy in the modern world cannot, in fact, resist the claims of totalitarianism by a vague and tepid belief in human rights and human decency ; it can stand only if it is successful in strengthening that belief with the conviction that only religion can command and with the enthusiasm which only religion can generate. It is because Communism has come to take the place of religion in the minds of so many of its adherents that it can command this conviction and enlist this enthusiasm. Democracy, if it is to survive, must draw upon a like energy and evoke a like enthusiasm.

The connection, then, which we are suggesting, is reciprocal. Religion can only survive in the modern world if it addresses itself to the problems of the day and shows how they can be solved consonantly with the maintenance of the religious way of life. It must, in fact, be interpreted anew in the light of the existing situation. It may well be that democracy can only be maintained, and the rights of the individual preserved, if the enthusiasm which religious faith can generate can be harnessed in its service.

RECOVERING OUR LOST HERITAGE

The moral of all this seems fairly plain. There are no panaceas, and anyone who believes that there is some magical short-cut out of man's chronically tragic situation, is inviting either violent catastrophe through an ideological crusade or else a slower but equally sure disaster through the creation of a brave new world. Every gain has to be paid for, and the best we can do is to keep all our intelligence and all our goodwill continually mobilized for the purpose of reducing the inevitable cost of progress to a minimum.

We must discover what are the circumstances under which human beings can live most sanely, contentedly and happily. In the light of such knowledge we can proceed to use advancing technology for the purpose of creating these favourable conditions at the lowest possible cosmic cost. By these means we may hope to achieve, not indeed an earthly Paradise, nor any sort of perfectionist Utopia, but the more modest and much more desirable objective—a genuinely human society.

We can go back to old-fashioned things whose values are more enduring, to courage and self-respect in humble circumstances. We can learn, and teach our children, that basic lore of happiness, the enjoyment of every-day things. We say "the best things in life are free," and go on wanting the ones which cost a great deal of money. Like savages and children, we crave swift motion, loud noises, brilliant colours and exciting new gadgets. We need to slow down, think hard, feel deeply, read widely and long, to find the lost heritage of simple living which was once the priceless legacy of the country folk.

The mind has to be considered, the spirit as well as the body. For happiness, or the chance of it, the mind must be fed, stimulated and kept interested; it is the dullness of life, the greyiness and drabness of so many lives, which is hard to bear in our modern mechanized world and all its mean streets. As one escape from it, even war has an allurements: even revolution, or crime, or vice. Men and women—youth especially—must have some adventure, something to take them out of themselves, some form of mental excitement beyond the drudgery of mechanical toil.

To the great mass of men labour is not only rough, coarse and hard, but monotonous. It is long-continued repetition of the most trifling details. Much of the severest labour—lifting, digging, pounding—has been taken over by machinery. But monotony may seem to have become greater under the influence of the growing use of machinery and growing specialization of labour. The machine has made life easier, fuller of amusement, than it was before. But it removes from it meaning, contentment, happiness. That is why the stimulus of alcohol, the sedative of tobacco, the soothing effect of drugs, are so widely required; why the simple recreations that satisfied country folk have lost their attraction; why, as Walter Rathenau puts it, "drink, cards, agitation, the cinema and dissipation can alone flog up the mishandled nerves and muscles until they wilt again under the next day's toil."

Somehow we ought to get some kind of balance in our lives: exercise for both body and mind, a physical strength as well as an intellectual alertness, an awareness of Nature, a serenity of mind which comes from security of livelihood, a code of manners which has some nobility.

Perhaps, if one could eliminate worry, there would be a better chance of happiness. It is possible that half or more of our financial anxieties are due to lack of security. This desperate competition is not always for material benefit—more motor cars, more gadgets—but for security in the future, for old age, for times of sickness, for the education of a family. If all these things were assured there might be more serenity and a sense of peace. It is one of the arguments for Communism. That system, if it worked, would eliminate the fretfulness of the competitive spirit, by assuring everyone of a fair share of whatever is going. Unfortunately, present experiments in that direction are liable to eliminate the primitive needs of life, and life itself.

What we are looking for is the standard of life and the relative values which should be within reach of a civilized community as the basis of such common happiness as men and women may fairly expect. A great deal of this modern economic struggle for wealth, this frenzied competition, is really purposeless, if happiness is the purpose.

In our time, in spite of all material progress, there has been little increase in human happiness. At the moment there is a very decided regression. The reason is perhaps that we expect too much of material progress. It is good that people should be better housed and fed, and should have the worst drudgery taken from their shoulders by machines, and that they should be able to travel to and communicate with far distant places ; but none of these things will make them happy. Happiness comes from within, said the Buddha.

Certainly there is a way of life, known to those in whom religion has become a vital reality, which can in many cases satisfy the seeker of happiness. One factor in that way of life is an inner secret of serenity. Multitudes today have no place inside themselves where, in a noisy and turbulent world, they can calm down and be quiet, and if religion is as Professor Whitehead of Harvard University says it is, "what the individual does with his own solitariness," they have no religion, for they have no idea what to do with their solitariness, except to run away from it.

Activity without receptivity is their life, turmoil without tranquillity and the emotional effect of such peaceless living, with no inner sanctuary, is disastrous. Human personality is not made to operate on that basis.

Man, observed Vico in the 18th century, makes himself. He was, of course, merely referring to man's outward circumstances—to the conditions of his existence, his social frame-work, his laws, institutions, and organizations. Yet his remark has been regarded as having revolutionary implications. More than two thousand years earlier, the Buddha had preached a doctrine the revolutionary implications of which have yet to be recognised. He told Venerable Ananda, to be "light unto himself"; He preached to His disciples the doctrine that "by oneself one suffers, by oneself one ceases to suffer." Man, in other words, not only makes his outward circumstances, he also makes the conditions of his inner being, creates his own spiritual destiny.

It is because we have looked in the wrong place for happiness that we are in an unhappy age. The restlessness of people, young and old, who are always on the move, speeding from one public bar to the next, drinking hastily and uncritically, eternally and nervously smoking cigarettes; this is too familiar to need emphasising. Our perpetual and pointless hurry, our restless obsession with records, our eagerness to fill up every minute of our time with mechanical distractions—wireless, gramophone, cinema, dancing—lest there should be leisure for reflection, for looking into our own minds; and not least our disregard for religion: these are all the symptoms of our disease of chronic unhappiness. And we shall never find the cure where we are looking for it.

The cure lies in the achievement of a spiritual balance in our minds. It is ancient wisdom that to seek happiness in possessions is a delusion. Let us learn to be content with what we have. Let us learn to get rid of our false estimates and set up the higher ideals—a quiet home; flowers of our own planting; a few books full of the inspiration of genius; a few friends worthy of being loved, and able to love us in turn; a hundred innocent pleasures that bring no pain or remorse; a devotion to the right that will never swerve; a simple religion, full of love and kindness and goodwill—and to such a philosophy this world will give up all the empty joy it has.

Chapter VI

RELIGION AND THE STATE

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That, to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. That, whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundations on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.....

—Extract from the DECLARATION OF
INDEPENDENCE of the United States of
America—July 4, 1776.

(1) *The Rights of Man*

SACRED literature nowhere contains a nobler expression of transcendent human intelligence than that embodied in the American Declaration of Independence. When it affirmed that, among the inalienable rights of man, are "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness," the United States Government took its stand upon the most exalted interpretation of human destiny.

Nobody, be he rationalist or atheist or theologian, will deny that happiness is the most desirable state of being. If honest with himself, he will admit that a longing for this condition is the secret spring of his own higher activities. Indeed, if one studies, not the operations of physical functions, but the lives of his neighbours, he will discover that the hope and expectation of happiness sustain the individual man during his struggle for food and the individual woman in her reproductive sacrifices.

How to secure this individual content is the first question which human reason asks of itself. To this search of immature minds for an individual and ethical content, we owe the steady development of intelligence and morality.

The search for the most direct route to this desirable estate has absorbed the energies of individual intelligence for ages. The knowledge acquired throughout the process constitutes our civilization with all of its science, art, literature and learning, together with all of its religions, philosophies, and philanthropies.

The Declaration states: "all men are created equal," but the whole trouble has been that no two men are equal. Ideals as to what constitutes happiness have, therefore, varied as much as individuality itself. They have differed as much as do men in point of time, race, country and development.

The right, not merely of pursuing but of obtaining happiness, which is named as one of the natural rights of man in the American Declaration of Independence, may seem, in this acquisitive, exploitative and turbulent world of ours, to be a very large order on the so-called Bank of Providence. The right of pursuing happiness is clearly only a generalised form in which is asserted the right of the individual to be left alone in his conduct. The right to pursue happiness may be quite compatible with the right to be left to suffer the effects of one's own folly, though it might also suggest a right to be protected against the folly, as well as against the wilful malice, of other people.

But a right to obtain happiness—if it means anything more than the right to pursue happiness when such a right is guaranteed by the State to its citizens—involves a recognition, however implicit and unconscious, that the functions of the State are not merely the negative function of securing to the individual certain rights as against other individuals, but the positive functions of aiding him in the attainment of his desires, so far as these are compatible with the general well-being.

There is no doubt that the recognition of happiness as the end of government—still more the recognition of the common happiness as the end—involves a departure from the strict individualism with which the doctrine of natural rights is most properly connected. It is true, also, that the term "happiness" may be interpreted in such a way that the making of it the direct end of government would justify tyranny, and would logically lead to a refusal of those other rights of liberty and of the pursuit of happiness which were chiefly in the minds of those who began the American, the French and the Russian Revolutions.

If happiness meant, as Hedonist Utilitarianism professes to make it mean, simply a sum of pleasures and absence of pains, then undoubtedly such happiness might be best secured by a powerful and skilful ruling caste, keeping the mass of the people, if possible, in comfortable and contented ignorance, taking care that they were fed and amused, saved from the anxiety and misery of the struggle for existence and of the struggle for intellectual and moral progress.

This is not practically what the great Utilitarian reformers have meant by "happiness," whatever logical consistency might have obliged them to admit. Nor is it what the mass of mankind have commonly meant by happiness; for the contrast between "real and true happiness" on the one side, and "pleasure" on the other, is a commonplace of popular moralising. Still less can any such conception of "happiness"—as a sum of pleasures—be retained as a conception of the ethical end by the Evolutionist Utilitarian.

Since, on the confession of John Stuart Mill himself, happiness is something that can only be attained by not being pursued; since, according to Clifford, the individual's happiness is irrelevant to the welfare of the social organism, except in so far as it makes him a more efficient member, it would be better in ethics to give up the use of the term altogether as a designation of the moral end, adopting some vaguer but less misleading term, such as "welfare" or "well-being." Such a term would suggest the two elements both of which must enter into any conception of the ethical end that avoids the one-sidedness alike of Asceticism and of Hedonism—the element of right conduct, virtuous action, well-doing and the element of favourable environment, pleasure, or of doing well in the sense of faring well. Furthermore, the idea of welfare is more applicable to a community than the idea of happiness.

Nevertheless, popular usage allows us to speak not only of an individual, as in the case of Mahatma Gandhi's question to the Kandyan Chief (referred to previously in these pages), but also of a nation being "happy." And popular usage may make it convenient and permissible in politics to retain the term "happiness" as expressible of the end. For ethics, happiness appears rather the external and accidental element in the end; it depends on favourable circumstances, whether right conduct is unimpeded or not. But since politics is concerned with the provision of these favourable circumstances, and can only indirectly affect the right conduct of the individual, happiness may be said to be the end of politics.

Nearly every one would now-a-days allow that the happiness of the citizen ought to be included among the ends of government. How far this end can be attained by leaving people alone, and how far it can be attained by interference—on this the great practical differences of opinion would begin. Where some would lay more stress on the need of directly removing obstacles to physical health, to intellectual and moral development, others would lay more stress on the need of "freedom,"—on the need of letting people learn

deflect their thoughts from this world; or theories evolved by professional politicians and newspaper editors; or gaining of national freedom, or enhancement of national prestige.

History shows us that the masses have never cherished these proffered compensations. History offers no example of a truly religious community whose members would at any time have been glad to exchange earth for heaven; it proves that there has never been any widespread interest in the schemes of idealists or in efforts to explain mankind and our place in the universe. History makes it clear that national pride and ambition have been felt very seldom by more than a small number, and that even these few have, as a rule, soon altered their views.

The sacrifice of the life and peace of a people to so-called national honour or greatness is absurd today, for no people disputes the honour of another, and "Great Powers" no longer exist, in the higher sense of the term. The masses are not interested in the authoritarian arguments of newspaper editors to prove to them that Dominion Status is really Swaraj, and the question of what flag waves over a government building is far less important to the people than what is being done in that building towards the equitable distribution of goods.

The question then arises as to whether the desired security, peace and happiness are attainable here in this very human world. There are those who believe it can be. But, do not they, may be unconsciously, contradict themselves by looking above themselves for that ideal order so ardently wished for?

"The fundamental cause of the grievous disorders with which mankind is afflicted", said the Marquess of Zetland, former Governor of Bengal and an admirer of Buddhism, "is to be found in the fact that man's progress on the material plane has outstripped his advancement on moral and spiritual planes." A more devotional study of the Buddha and His teaching, and its application to personal and national life, would result in spiritual and moral uplift. Present day Buddhists are very naive in some of their assertions, and in their trusting acceptance of tradition.

With the transition, from the personal presence of the founder of any religion to a society formed to carry on his message and work, there is a loss of power and understanding; even his wisest and most devoted disciples cannot have the fulness of his spiritual genius and insight. Some kind of organisation is necessary so that the message shall not be forgotten, but any organised system is bound to lose something of the teacher's freshness and originality.

In the now receding controversy over the question: "Should bhikkhus take part in politics?" a Nayaka Thero made the astounding assertion that, just as a water lily that rises from mud and stagnant water remains thereafter without contamination with the scum from which it arose, so also a bhikkhu, after entering the Order, remains without contamination with the low order from which he arose. What a parody of the Great Renunciation!

Prince Siddhartha stepped down from his royal seat, left his lovely Yasodhara and new-born son, not to emerge as a 'butterfly on the lily,' but to become a 'worm in the mud'. His intention was to speak to the mass of people who were leading lives of despair and desperation, who were unhappy and yet did not know what to do about their unhappiness.

The sight of a water lily rising pure and white from mud and stagnant water, or of a shrub stunted for years by the browsing of cattle, but at last bearing fruit on an interior scion, was to Siddhartha a significant sign that man, too, could rise above unfavourable circumstances if he was as persistent and cheerful as a plant. He believed in life.

He had long been distressed by the sight of man's feverish attempts to lay up treasures on earth, his frittering away of life on non-essentials at the expense of what he really was at the core of his being. So he left his home and everything else to solve the problem. Such was the meaning of the Great Renunciation.

For himself, Gautama did not want to realise, only when the time came to die, that it was much too late and that He had not even begun to live. He hungered for an early solution of the problem of life. He wanted to prove, if possible, that life could be lived simply, honestly, deeply, if one cultivated the ability and courage to lop off the things that were not vital to life. But, on the other hand, if life was mean, and not sublime, He wanted to find out that, too, and publish the fact. In His solution of the problem, in both its spiritual and material aspects, lies the great Message of the Buddha.

In this message He demanded an ever widening fellowship for each human being, and called upon the State to protect the citizen from exploitation by the greedy: to secure for him justice, and to give him equality of opportunity. These demands, which find a ready reponse in every normal human being we meet, spring naturally and inevitably from the attitude of the Founder of Buddhism towards individual men, and towards the sensible

aspirations of all human society. To Him every man was of infinite worth; and His goal for society was the creation of a community of all human beings, irrespective of caste or class, colour or race.

(2) *Religion and Politics*

It has often been said that, with no definite belief in a personal God or an undying personality in man, and with the consequent absence of any worship or prayer, Buddhism is not a religion but a philosophical and ethical system only. This is true if by "religion" is meant "a binding or an abiding relationship between man and his God." We admit that, according to this definition, Buddhism is not a religion, as it has been conceived without the concepts of an Almighty God and an immortal soul.

Professor Max Muller, in his *Lectures on the Science of Religion*, talks of "the broad foundations on which all religions are built up—the belief in a divine power, the acknowledgment of sin, the habit of prayer, the desire to offer sacrifice, and the hope of a future eternal life." But popular usage has been too strong for him. Not one of these five is found in pure Buddhism, yet he calls Buddhism a religion.

But, what is religion? How often has the question been asked, its import conceived of in different ways, and, accordingly, variously answered; opinions of its nature and meaning are so many and conflicting that one despairs of arriving at any tangible agreement. Here are a few definitions taken at random:

OXFORD DICTIONARY: "System of faith and worship; human recognition of superhuman controlling power and especially of a personal God entitled to obedience, effect of such recognition on conduct etc.,"

BUTLER: "Religion implies a future state."

MATTHEW ARNOLD: "Religion is morality touched with emotion."

COMTE: "The worship of Humanity."

CARLYLE: "The thing a man does practically believe, the thing a man does lay practically to heart and knows for certain, concerning his vital relations to this mysterious universe and his duty and destiny therein."

RUSKIN: "Our national religion is the performance of Church ceremonies and preaching of soporific truths or untruths to keep the mob quietly at work while we amuse ourselves."

J. S. MILL: "The essence of religion is the strong and earnest direction of the emotions and desires towards an ideal object recognised as of the highest excellence, and as rightly paramount over all selfish objects of desire."

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS: "Goodness rendering to God the honour due to Him."

VOLTAIRE: "An absurdity to keep the multitude in subjection."

MARX: "Religion is the sob of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, the spirit of conditions utterly unspiritual. It is the opium of the poor."

ENGELS: "Religion is nothing but the fantastic reflection in men's minds of those external forces which control their early life."

SIR E. RAY LANKESTER: "Religion means the knowledge of our destiny and of the means of fulfilling it. We can say no more and no less of science."

JUNG: "Religion is the sublimation of the incestuous libido."

FREUD: "The beginnings of religion, ethics, society and art meet in the Oedipus Complex."

PROF. WHITEHEAD: "Religion is what the individual does with his own solitude. If you are never solitary, you are never religious."

ALDOUS HUXLEY: "Religion is, among many other things, a system of education by means of which human beings may train themselves, first, to make desirable changes in their own personalities and, at one remove, in society, and, in the second place, to heighten consciousness and so establish more adequate relations between themselves and the universe of which they are parts."

LENIN: "Religion teaches those who toil in poverty all their lives to be resigned and patient in this world, and consoles them with the hope of reward in heaven. It is an opiate of the people, a sort of spiritual vodka, meant to make the slaves of capitalism tread in the dust their human form and their aspirations to a semi-decent existence."

SOVIET DICTIONARY: "A fantastic faith in gods, angels and spirits....a faith without any scientific foundations. Religion is being supported and maintained by the reactionary circles. It serves for the subjugation of the working people and for building up the power of the exploiting bourgeois classes etc.,"

One might easily quote a whole volume of definitions but each addition would serve only to make the issue more confused and uncertain. It is computed that there are about 1,580,000,000 people professing some kind of religion, yet it is exceedingly questionable whether five per cent of that vast number could agree as to what fundamentally constitutes "Religion".

In spite of the juxtaposition of ideas, the noblest and most comprehensive ideas on the matter were uttered by one whom the vulgar termed "Atheist" and "Infidel"—Thomas Paine. When almost hounded to death by his persecutors, he valiantly said: "The world is my country, mankind are my brethren, and to do good is my religion."

How puerile, vain and childish seem the sophistical utterances of priests when compared with the human philosophy of the great English reformer. "To do good": that is the sum-total of all religion, and yet how sadly lacking it is in what the multitude call "religion".

Thomas Paine is not singular in his definition of "religion." Two thousand three hundred years before him, another Atheist not only defined "religion" in the same way as Paine did, by saying that it was

Refraining from all evil,
Practising of all that is good,
Living with a clean heart,

but He also told mankind that the way to 'worship' that religion of goodness was by

ANNIHILATION OF ALL GREED,
EXTINCTION OF ALL HATRED,
LIQUIDATION OF ALL IGNORANCE.

What is the ultimate goal for the Buddhist? The obvious answer and the one which springs easily to the lips, is "Nirvana". But what exactly is Nirvana? It is described as "bliss unspeakable" and "supreme happiness." But you cannot speak of "bliss" or "happiness" which is not experienced, and therefore such a description implies that the ego *can* know when Nirvana has been reached. Still, the proper course is to arrive at the root meaning of the word.

The common definition of "Nirvana" among all Buddhists is "deliverance," viz., deliverance from unhappiness, or salvation.

The question is, what is the nature of this deliverance? The etymology of the word is obvious enough. Nirvana means "extinction," viz., the "extinction of self." Nirvana is attained by the extinction of the illusion of self, with all it implies, covetousness, hate, dullness, lust, and all sinful desires.

Whatever be the aspect of religion we may consider, it is always true that man is its pivotal point. The essence of religion is the emancipation from dependence on the unknown. The more man advances in culture, the more does he depend on himself to get over his dependence on the unknown. Religion is essentially a means, a mode of action, to realise man's hope of salvation, of deliverance from unhappiness, be it due to poverty, ignorance, disease, old age, or death. The end of religion is always salvation; a larger, freer, more satisfactory, and more abundant life. It does not consist in the profession of a belief in God, the soul and immortality, as recorded in a scripture, or condensed in a creed. God, soul and immortality are the illusions that have crept into religion and, without their suppression, religion cannot appear in its true colours. Lack of confidence in his own powers, engendered by ignorant self-seeking, has made man an abject slave of these illusions. These delusions have turned life into a vale of tears.

Life as the Buddha saw it was full of *dukkha* or suffering. Nirvana was the elimination of this suffering. Much has been made of the emphasis by the Buddha upon the statement, "existence is suffering," but although He did emphasise it, it was not His own, but the world-negating conclusion of the other Upanishadic thinkers. To say that existence is bound up with *dukkha* (sorrow), *anicca* (evanescence), and *anatta* (unreality), is not original. What is original is the *remedy* which the Buddha proposes—extinction of *lobha* (greed), *dosa* (hatred), *moha* (ignorance), and this is practical (not speculative), ethical, and free from extremes. It means, among other things, the evolution of a social order which aims at perfection of mankind and doing full justice to the rights of man. The Buddha's doctrine aims at perfection of man so that he may lead a happy life in this world itself. It is not, as in the case of some other religions, to prepare him to meet his Maker in another world.

Having satisfied ourselves as to the nature of the original doctrine of the Buddha, we can now proceed to an examination of how best to translate that doctrine into the terms of a practical religion.

“Religion is politics ; and politics is brotherhood,” said William Blake. Ultimately, any political question becomes a religious question. A nation which is permeated with evil ideas will inevitably tend to put those ideas into practice and will eventually succeed, unless its evil ideas are countered by others. What happened in Germany not long ago illustrates this viewpoint. So also a nation which is permeated with good ideas will put those good ideas into practice.

It is also true that the existence of evil conditions in a country is evidence of the existence of evil ideas in a people ; and, in a country where bad conditions are prevalent, obviously evil ideas must be prevalent. It is, therefore, necessary, seeing that evil ideas underlie evil conditions, that evil ideas be supplanted by good ideas. For if we spend our energies combating evil conditions without combating the evil ideas underlying them, we can achieve at best but palliatives, and do nothing towards the development of personality, the real object of all political activity.

It is true that Governments are, properly, not concerned with ideas but with conditions : but, as ideas underlie conditions, it is necessary that Governments should be informed and impregnated, as it were, by ideas. Religion exists to inspire human beings, enrich personality, stimulate action, and ennoble thought and motive. Governments exist to create, secure and preserve such conditions as are consistent with the attainment of this end. Lord Halifax once said, “Government is the instrument to secure conditions favourable to the fullest possible development of personality.”

Nearly every one would in these times admit that the perfection of the citizen ought to be the end of government; and since politics is concerned with the provision of conditions most favourable for the attainment of this end, the perfection of the citizen may be said to be the end of politics.

Although different definitions of the term have been used, we may, broadly speaking, regard politics as concerned with the governance of communities, in themselves and among themselves—that is, with the laying down of definite rules or laws for the control of human conduct in individuals and in groups, and for determining the general conditions under which they live.

As politics is concerned with governance, we must first ask what is the reason and the aim of the control which it seeks to establish.

“To say that politics always exists for the sake of human beings, and not the contrary,” writes C. A. Richardson in his *Strategy of Living*, “ought to be a truism, but the history of political development shows that it is a truism which must be constantly emphasized. The only intelligible reason for laying down regulative principles of conduct is, not that this is in itself a rather intriguing and stimulating game or contest, but that without such principles, human life would be anarchic and therefore self-destructive; and the only intelligible aim for a particular code of law and order is that in its own field it leads to, or renders possible, a form of life which is desirable to human beings for its own sake.”

What is this desirable form of life? If the thesis which we have been developing is well founded, then it is for mankind to select a form of life which would lead to perfection, and thereby to the state of universal happiness. The perfection of the citizen is the aim of both religion and politics; and it is accomplished by the joint effort of religion, government and the citizen. We would therefore maintain that the practice of politics is significant and intelligible only if it is directed to the establishment of laws governing the life of communities of such a kind as to provide the most favourable conditions for the perfection of the citizen and the progressive attainment of happiness of all concerned.

Now, politicians will inevitably differ as to the best kinds of laws and regulations to achieve this end. But, among the great variety of individual opinions, there would undoubtedly be apparent a basic law not only acceptable to them but also in harmony with religion, as robust commonsense dilutes religion and reduces it, with politics, into the common problem of the pursuit of a happy human life.

The aphorisms of great men look simple. At first sight they look like platitudes—to the point of being trite. Their significance lies in the difficulty of carrying them out. The Eightfold Path, embodying positive practice of virtues, may be somewhat difficult to follow, but how infinitely simple appear the three exhortations: “Renounce Greed! Renounce Hatred! Renounce Delusion!” Simple indeed, because they are mere negative imperatives.

The world would have had a different tale to tell, and Buddhism a different course to follow, if only its apostles, in the expounding of the Doctrine, had shifted the emphasis, from the speculative

and world-negating Upanishadic doctrine of *anicca*, *ducca*, *anatta*, to the fundamental and practical Buddhist doctrine of the eradication of *lobha* (greed), *dosa* (hatred), *moha* (delusion). While the moral and mental discipline and the spiritual aspects of Buddhism are highly important, they are not enough to constitute the thing itself. Buddhism, like Democracy or Communism, is a way of life, and has to be given practical shape as a social structure or a form of government, or, in other words, as a political system.

When Lenin, after the overthrow of the Tsarist regime in Russia, secured a free hand to put into practice the teachings of Karl Marx, he did not set up temples with images of the founder of Marxism and then ask the Russians to worship the images, nor did he stop at setting up preaching halls for the enunciation of the doctrine in *Das Kapital*; but he set up a State, the functions of which harmonised with the teachings of Marx, and made the people actually to live the way of life preached by Marx.

Similarly, the highest "worship" we can offer to the Buddha is to live according to His teaching. Buddhism is a way of life which supplies an antidote to the anxieties and anguish of the present, and makes possible the best approach to serenity that is available to an earnest mind in our tortured and uncertain world. As such, Buddhism has to be lived and practised—merely worshipping the images of its Founder is not living up to or practising His teaching. In a religion in which there is no place for a Creator or ruler of the universe, there can be nothing corresponding to what is ordinarily called worship or prayer. "Worship consists in fulfilling the design of the Being honoured, not in offerings of perfumes, garlands and the like," says the *Jātakamāla*. Therefore, true worship, in Buddhism, does not consist in the performance of genuflections before the image of the Buddha but in being inspired by His genius, and bringing to fruition the ideas which immortalise Him. To the true Buddhist, Buddhism ought to mean, not the building of temples for the housing of images of the Buddha, but leading a life in accordance with the principles of His teachings.

The highest purpose of religion, declared Confucius, is to regulate the life of this world—"I know nothing of the next world." This regulation begins with the investigation of life. "Our ancestors, having investigated life, increased their knowledge. Having increased their knowledge, they purified their thoughts. Having

purified their thoughts, they rectified their hearts. Having rectified their hearts, they harmonised their characters. Having harmonised their characters, they adjusted their family life. And having adjusted their family life, they brought justice to the State."

This is at the core of the Confucian religion and the Confucian philosophy. The business of life is to advance from individual knowledge to social justice. A pure heart is the concomitant of an informed mind, and the Confucianists, unlike the Buddhists, try to follow the teachings of Confucius rather than to bow before his image.

The Buddha defined a way by which man could live a life in harmony with the cosmic laws, which is the only way to happiness, and which constitutes the ultimate aim of both religion and politics. The task of any government in any country, the population of which is predominantly Buddhist, is to harmonise the Buddha's way of life with the every-day life of the community; or, in other words, with the Functions of the State.

(3) *Harmony of Religion and Politics*

THE question remains : how to harmonise religion and politics ? Both are fundamental necessities of life having one common goal. Both politics and religion are important factors of human civilization, and we cannot do without either of them. Politics, by itself, is not an evil, but when it is misdirected by unscrupulous people, it becomes evil. If there is no police to protect the people against thieves and robbers, if there is no army to guard the country against foreign aggression, one's very life is unsafe. So one should be thankful to those who hold the reins of administration. But if, sitting at the helm of affairs, they betray their trust, they deserve unequivocal condemnation. Those who are inspired by idealism, and actuated by a high sense of justice and equity, are alarmed at the trend of politics in modern times. Politics has become synonymous with fascism, imperialism, militarism, and the biological instinct of struggle and of elbowing out others for one's own enjoyment of power. These things cannot continue for long. If you fight on the plane of animal life, you have to die like animals, too. If you worship the brute in man, you descend to the level of brutes.

Here religion comes into the field, and sounds a note of warning. Religion, embodying the spiritual aspirations of the human race, says, 'If you want peace and happiness, base your life on high moral and spiritual principles'. The greater the greed or avarice, the less there is of real happiness. By dishonest means and unscrupulous actions you may succeed for a time, but you must remember that thereby you permanently imperil the cause of personal and national happiness.

In fact politics and religion, at their best, are but the obverse and reverse of the same force making for righteousness in the State. Religion does this by trying to destroy all wickedness through changing the nature of man by teaching and preaching, and politics does it by changing the environment and by eliminating, by force, all wickedness. When these two processes are harmonised we have the set-up of the ideal State.

The ends for which a State exists are :

(1) Protection of the citizen, whether external or internal: (a) against either the attacks of other States or of individuals within the State; (b) against being exploited by individuals from within or outside the State.

(2) Justice : The establishment of laws which are just to various citizens within the State. In essence, it may be stated, the main end of the State is Justice.

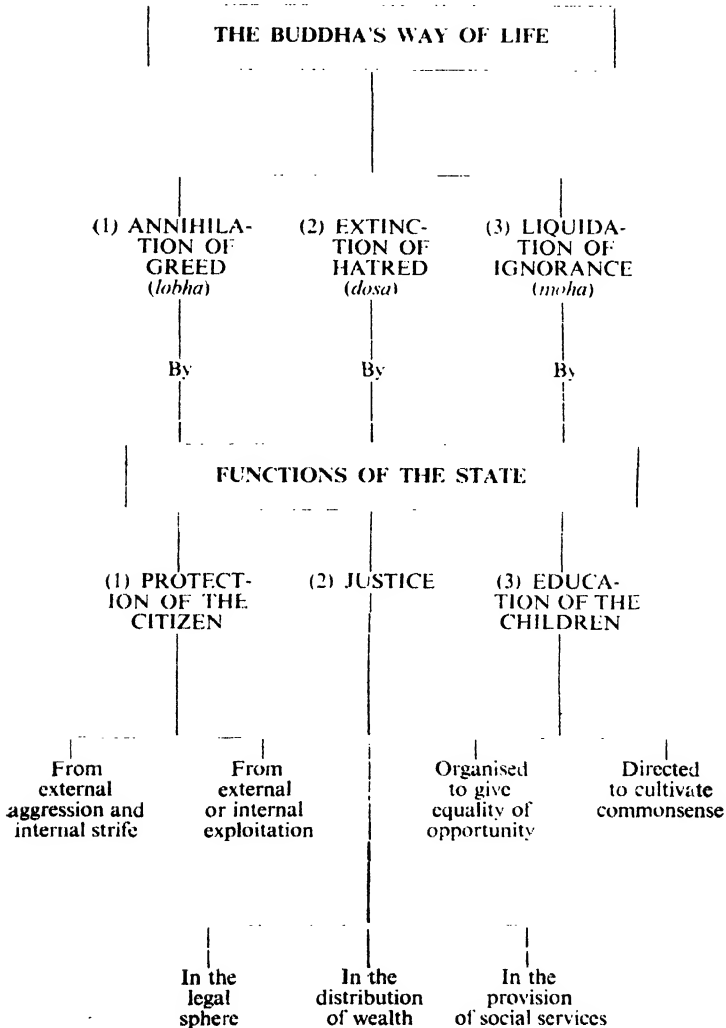
Both these ends require the use of force. But the State is primarily an institution aiming at protection and justice, and uses force merely to carry out these ends.

There is also a third which may be regarded as a fundamental aim of the State, namely :

(3) Education, which means civic education, aiming at the development of a child into a citizen. To this end his education should be organised to give him equality of opportunity and directed to cultivate common sense.

Of course, the individual is more than a citizen; he has interests other than the political interests which are, or should be, directed to the problem of government only that the life of all individual members of the community may be rendered more rich, more full, more free.

HARMONISATION OF THE BUDDHA'S WAY OF LIFE WITH THE FUNCTIONS OF THE STATE



Buddhism is an ethico-religious social philosophy and, as such, it must be harmonised with a system of government. From time immemorial, religion and politics have gone together and have furthered the advancement of civilization. In the ancient days, politics was sustained by religion. In India we hear of Rishis guiding kings and princes with advice, and in Ceylon we had the Sangha guiding our rulers for over 2000 years. The king would wield temporal power, but behind him was a sage or a bhikkhu who was the moral and spiritual force preventing him from going astray. As such, the guiding principle and ultimate motive of statecraft was how to make the subjects better spiritually and morally, in addition to making them happier materially.

If we study European history, we find a similar combination. The remoter the past to which we go, the greater is the influence of religion on politics. For the Greeks, ethics and politics were two aspects of a single enquiry. It was the function of ethics to prescribe the good life to the individual; it was the business of politics to determine the nature of the community in which the good life, as prescribed by ethics, could be lived. The *raison d'être* of politics, in other words, was to be found in an end beyond itself, an end which was ethical.

The great Empires of the ancient world—Assyria, Persia, Macedonia, Rome—had tried to build a universal State on the basis of power. The Buddha sought to found a wider community of mankind on the basis of love. Power meant the capacity to appropriate, to possess, to dominate: Love meant the capacity to share, to renounce, to sacrifice.

Good men, conscious that they are trustees for righteousness and truth and charged to defend others against the injuries of falsity and evil, are faced with the terrible task of reconciling power with love. Others, with less of goodwill, use power without scruple to enforce their own wills and compel others thereby to use power as a protection in self-defence—and so the bondage of evil grows.

When we must use power, or entrust power to others for them to use, we must wish that they and we may be preserved from the misuse of power which multiplies fear and resentment and injustice and strife, that they and we may seek and find that pure and peaceable wisdom which instils love and creates peace.

The big bullying empires of history, guarded by hosts of soldiers, ships and magistrates: scarcely one of them lasted longer than

perhaps three centuries. In the Order the Buddha established you have a movement of deliberate paupers, who prized poverty more than wealth; who took vows not to harm or kill other beings; who spent their time in contemplation of the unrealities of this impermanent world; who despised whatever the material world valued, and who valued whatever that world despises—meekness, generosity, love, meditation. And yet, where these mighty empires, built on greed, hatred and delusion, lasted just a few centuries, the impulse of self-denial carried the Buddhist community through 2500 years.

The philosophies behind the empires founded on power are very shallow; they have their day—it is really a very short day, and not a very restful one while it lasts. Whereas the great and universal love preached by the Buddha goes deep down to the very roots, the very breath and rhythm of life. It is the meek that will inherit the earth, it is the meek that *have* inherited the earth—because they alone are willing to live in harmony with it.

Aristotle said that the State exists “for the sake of goodness”—in plain words, to make better men of its citizens. The Greek mind had realized that schools and teaching and temples and preaching are not the only means by which character is shaped. More decisive in this respect is the structure of society in which we grow up. The social and political structures in which we grow up are moulds into which our plastic natures are run. If the end and object of life is to make men better, an essential means to that end is to see that the moulds into which their natures are run are properly shaped. What men in the mass become will mainly depend on the kind of polity in which they are bred. The structure of the State is therefore of cardinal importance, as the Greeks had seen.

In the view of the Buddha, the end and object of life is to perfect the nature of men. Can we doubt that a mind so profound had seen that, to perfect men, you must perfect the social structure which shapes their characters? This cannot be done merely by teaching and preaching, by calling on men to be better. The political structure in which they grow up must be also improved, must be made consonant with realities, that is to say, with the Law of the Buddha.

The task which the Buddha left to His followers was to create on earth a polity ordered in accordance with His teaching; a polity

edifice of faith." The figure it holds is both greater and less than the Man who walked and talked on the foot-hills of the Himalayas: more indisputably a traditional god, more doubtfully an illumined man. But which figure holds the crystalline nucleus of truth? We have no hesitation in saying—the Man.

During the two hundred years that had elapsed between the Buddha's death and Asoka's reign, the Master's disciples had composed many books about Him; and their followers, becoming numerous, certainly believed already that He was more than a man. Had He not discovered the secret of how to avoid being born again? No man had ever discovered that before. Where was He? What was the blissful state of non-personality in which He existed? These were mysterious and entrancing questions. Many people were occupied in trying to answer them. In the process, the Buddha became less human, more divine.

And it was left to Asoka to rescue the Buddha, the Man, from a place amidst the crowd of gods to which His followers had thrust Him. Asoka was the Lenin of Buddhism, as he was the first to translate the Buddha's Way of Life into a polity. Asoka made the people actually practise the way of life preached by the Buddha. And look at the result achieved! A Chinese traveller to India of those times has recorded that, "Theft was unknown; people were extremely honest and truthful; peace and happiness reigned all over the country; there was no fight between the rulers and the ruled, between the employer and the employed; and there was equitable distribution of wealth." Compare this with the present state of affairs. Which is better?

Amidst the tens of thousands of monarchs that crowd the pages of history, the name of Asoka shines, and shines almost alone, as a star. In its main lines the code of life which Asoka gave to his people, and tried to give to the whole world, by a unique campaign for righteousness, was just the simple standard of social conduct, preached by the Buddha, which is one of the conditions of the stability of a civilization. For the first and only time in history, Asoka established a Ministry for the Development of Human Character. Another official in his government was Director of Women's Welfare. He had his moral exhortations or Edicts carved upon stone pillars, twenty to seventy feet in height, which he set up in all parts of his Empire.

These celebrated Edicts of the greatest of Buddhist monarchs, and, if H. G. Wells be right, the greatest monarch of all times anywhere in the world, are but discourses of the Buddha. Asoka.

showed both in his personal life and in his administration that the Buddha's Dhamma was not a mere philosophical doctrine but a way of life to be cultivated. "How entirely compatible that way of living," says Wells in *The Outline of History*, with reference to the Eightfold Path of Buddhism, "then was with the most useful and beneficent activities his (Asoka's) life shows, Right Aspiration, Right Effort, and Right Livelihood distinguished his career." Those who criticize Buddhism as being just "other-worldly" and out of touch with real life, implying its so-called impracticability, would give up their misconception if they would only read these Edicts of Asoka.

"Asoka," says Joseph McCabe in *The Golden Ages of History*, "did not confine his improvement of the State to a correction of individual conduct. He built a number of hospitals and had large gardens of medicinal herbs which he distributed to the poor. He reformed the prisons and, anticipating our advanced ideas on the subject, urged officials to help prisoners to see the blunder of crime rather than punish them. He recommended the education and kindly treatment of slaves and servants. He built hostels, dug wells and planted trees along the roads for travellers. He opened "spinning-houses" (workshops) for widows and poor women and made provision for the aged. He had thousands of vessels of water placed on the streets of his capital to meet the contingency of fire, and he imposed a fine upon any man who would not help to extinguish a fire in his neighbour's house. He made it a penal offence to throw dead animals or filth upon the streets. He instituted a department of State to attend to the welfare of the backward races in his Empire. And, above all, he denounced war and most ardently desired the friendly intercourse of all nations, sending his missionaries as far as Syria in the West to preach his gospel. His own people were his children, but all men were his brothers."

How very modern, you reflect! Yes, this is the outcome, the result, when a country gets imbued with the spirit of the teaching of the Master, and is ruled according to the Law of the Buddha.

It took over 1000 years for the Christian world to attain the level of culture and civilization which prevailed prior to the disintegration of the Roman Empire. A glance at the general state of affairs in the sixteenth century shows us that, even with Europe on the verge of the Renaissance, licentiousness and cruelty were still rampant in most countries.

In Germany, the feudal lords, unable at the time to loot other countries, were busy exploiting the poor peasants of their own.

They slaughtered and drowned in the Danube alone thousands of starving people. In France, Catherine de Medici ordered the horrible massacre of St. Bartholomew, finding thousands of loyal Frenchmen ready and willing to slay their compatriots. In Rome, Pope Borgia had brought conditions in the Vatican down to the level of Sodom and Gomorrah. In Spain, the Inquisition was blackening the pages of history with sadistic cruelty; while in England the common people were given the frequent spectacle of witches and so-called sorcerers being burned at the stake, and King Henry had no scruples about getting rid of his wives or his friends in the wholesale style of Nero.

But in India, soon after the Buddha's death, there occurred a social phenomenon which has not been duplicated anywhere else. The spiritual revolution brought about by the Buddha's teachings and the humanitarianism it inspired was quick in developing. Within two hundred years of the Buddha's death, we find in Asoka's India humane laws and a culture and civilization unsurpassed even in modern times.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the Prime Minister of India, moving the resolution that, in the centre of the white band of the National Flag of India, there should be the design of the *Dhamma Cakka*, "The Wheel of the Law," the symbol of Buddhism, which appears on the abacus of the Sarnath Lion Capital of Asoka, said: "That wheel is a symbol of India's ancient culture; it is a symbol of the many things that India had stood for through the ages. So we thought that this *Dharma Chakra* emblem should be there, and that wheel appears. For my part, I am exceedingly happy that in this sense indirectly we have associated with this flag of ours, not only this emblem, but in a sense the name of Asoka, one of the most magnificent names not only in India's history but in world history. It is well that at this moment of strife, conflict and intolerance, our minds should go back towards what India stood for in the ancient days and what it has stood for, I hope and believe, essentially throughout the ages, in spite of mistakes and errors and degradation from time to time."

Chapter VII

THE REVOLT IN THE TEMPLE

“Warriors, Lord, we call ourselves. In what way are we warriors?”
“We wage war, O Brethren; therefore are we called warriors.” “Wherefore, Lord, do we wage war?” “For lofty virtue, for high endeavour, for sublime wisdom—for these do we wage war: therefore are we called warriors.”

—Dialogue between the BUDDHA
and His disciples (*Anguttara Nikaya*).

(1) *Buddhism: Its Growth and Decline*

THE Buddha's ministry lasted forty-five years. During this long period the Buddha and His disciples lived their lives according to strict rules laid down by the Master Himself. These rules were not cast iron ones or divine decrees laid down once and for all, but were set on various occasions, to uphold the spirit of the teaching and altered in divers circumstances to make them practicable. The Buddha and His disciples spent about nine months of the year in wandering about the country propagating the Doctrine, and the remaining three months of the rainy season in quiet retirement in the neighbourhood of towns and villages where kings, nobles and common people contended with one another for the honour of feeding them, and of providing their other needs.

The territory of the Buddha's ministry was a comparatively small portion of Aryan India, which included the old Kingdoms of Kosala and Magadha and the Free States near them, the territories now known as Oudh and Bihar. It was called the 'Eastern Land' in contrast to 'Western Hindustan,' the ancient seat of Vedic culture where the Brahmins were all-powerful. The Buddha's teaching does not appear to have influenced, to any great extent at least, the land of 'Western Hindustan,' where the Brahmin order was entrenched and was opposed to the religious influences of the East. The itinerant ministrations of the Buddha were chiefly between Savatthi (now Sahet Mahet), the capital of Kosala, on the north-west, and Rajagaha (now Rajgar), the capital of Magadha, on the south of Bihar. The distance between these two capitals was about four hundred miles.

The Buddha spent the rainy season, as a rule, at one or other of these cities, where generous admirers had given pleasant parks and gardens and dwelling-places to Him and His disciples, and lay followers waited eagerly to supply their needs. It was at these great

centres of population that the Buddha did His most effective work, and most of His recorded discourses are associated with either Rajagaha or Savatthi.

So long as the Buddha lived He was the Master of the Order ; His personal authority was supreme, His decision final. But soon after His death troubles began within the Order in dissensions and divisions. So, immediately after His death a great Council of 500 disciples met at Rajagaha, and Upali and Ananda Theros rehearsed the Vinaya and the Dhamma respectively. In this way the authorised version of the sayings of the Master was fixed and established.

A hundred years later, a second Council was held at Vaisali to settle ten questions of monastic discipline. After the Buddha's death, the bhikkhus lived as a monastic community, and differences arose amongst them on points of doctrine and discipline. By the time the second Council was held the Sangha—as the bhikkhus were collectively called—were already split into eighteen different sects belonging to four schools of thought called Mahasanghika, Sthavira, Sarvastivada, and Sammitiya.

The Order of the Sangha, as established by the Buddha, was a religious republic. It knew of no hierarchy, every member of the Order was equal and equally free, to pursue his ideal. The Buddha instituted the Order but fixed no graded services of His disciples. He nominated no successor : He provided for no means of the latter's election or appointment. He entrusted the Sangha with the task of upholding and disseminating His doctrine.

“ If he had been a lesser man,” declares Sir Hari Singh Gour in his *The Spirit of Buddhism*, “ the inclination of His mind would have impelled Him to nominate His faithful Ananda, who had ever stood loyally by Him and whose influence in the country was only second to His own, to the headship of the church. But the Buddha did not make that nomination, and, in making His Order the joint executors of His religious testament, He adopted a course at variance with both precedent and practice. For He knew that a religious order, as much as a political State, required a head to control its members. But He foresaw the danger of adopting such a course. He, therefore, appointed His Order the custodians of His doctrine.”

Though the Buddha had designated no successor, He left a large number of disciples, who had become graded amongst themselves as “ chief disciples ” (*Ara-Shravaka*) or “ great disciples ” (*Maha-Shravaka*), according to their qualifications. But these

and others, though entitled to consideration on account of their age, experience or learning, had no recognised status or position of authority in the Brotherhood.

When the Buddha refused to appoint a successor to Himself, He left His community like sheep without a shepherd, or like a rudderless ship upon the ocean. There was no central authority to enforce the Law and to maintain discipline. Even the decisions of the Councils held at Rajagaha and Vaisali did not command universal assent, and the Councils had no means of enforcing their decisions; each community might accept as much or as little as it thought fit.

So, from the earliest days, schisms arose in the Order, dissensions and discords which bore within themselves the germs of dissolution. It was very probable that, had not Asoka succeeded to the throne of unified India two centuries after the Buddha's death, the Doctrine, far from becoming a world religion, would hardly even have survived.

The appearance of Alexander the Great on India's western frontier led to the formation of the great united north Indian kingdom under Chandragupta. He and his son, Bindusara, were not Buddhists, but rather favoured the Brahmins. His grandson Asoka, however, became the greatest Buddhist monarch of history. His vast empire contained peoples of diverse castes and creeds, and to consolidate his power Asoka found that Buddhism, with its tolerant attitude to everybody, was more accommodating than Brahminism, which decreed the ruling powers as well as the religious functions to particular castes. Asoka made Buddhism the State religion and gave it an impetus which is still in force.

Through the endeavours of Asoka, Buddhism became a world religion. All over his vast empire, which extended from the valley of the Kabul to the mouths of the Ganges and from the Himalayas to the south of the Vindhya mountains, he gave orders that his Edicts should be engraven on stone pillars, so that they might abide for ever. He sent missionaries to all parts of India, from Kashmir to Ceylon, even to countries not under his sway. The thirteenth Edict states that he sent missionaries to Antiochus II of Syria, Ptolemy II of Egypt, Antigonos Gonatos of Macedonia, Magas of Cyrene and Alexander II of Epirus.

Under Asoka, Buddhism became the paramount religion of India, and it has been said that the decline of Buddhism was due to its widespread success during his reign. It was impossible for the leaders to exercise the strictest authority, as in former days, over new converts to the faith. Everywhere the missionaries were received, whole nations were welcomed within the pale; the

consequence was that the distinctly Buddhist philosophic conceptions did not become deeply implanted in the minds of converts, who, while accepting the ethics in part, retained much of their old Brahminical doctrines.

State patronage did not save Buddhism from troubles. During Asoka's time its troubles were within rather than without. Asoka gave emphasis to the moral side of Buddhism, since there was a tendency for new practices to creep into the religion. Because of the increased respect now paid to the Order, many men of doubtful views were attracted to it. "Heretics assumed the yellow robe," says the *Mahavamsa*, "in order to share in its advantages ; whenever they had opinions of their own they gave them forth as doctrines of the Buddha, they acted according to their own will, and not according to what was right."

Under the patronage of Asoka a third Council was held at Pataliputra a century after Vaisali ; the distinguished Thera Moggaliputta Tissa presided, and it was convened "for the uprooting and destruction of all false doctrine," since the community was, at that time, rent by differences.

Asoka's empire fell to pieces soon after his death, and then India was invaded by the Greeks who exerted great influence on Buddhist culture. Next came the Scythians who founded the Kushan Empire. Kanishka, the greatest of the Scythian kings, became a Buddhist and held, in the first century, a fourth Council at Jalandhara in Kashmir. What exactly happened at this Council is not known, but it marked the division of Buddhism into the two great divisions existing today—the Theravāda and the Mahāyāna schools. The Mahāyānists followed the canon drawn up by the Jalandhara Council, adopted Sanskrit as its language and developed the Doctrine in a mystical, theological and devotional way. The Theravāda used Pali as its language and tried to preserve the rationalistic, monastic and puritanic elements of the Doctrine.

In spite of these dissensions, it was during the next few centuries that Buddhism enjoyed its greatest popularity and material prosperity in India. When Fa Hien visited the country during the fifth century, he found Buddhism flourishing in great strength, though it was no longer the religion of its Founder but a popular religion full of supernatural and magical elements.

In the seventh century another Chinese pilgrim, Hiuen-Tsiang, visited India and found that Buddhism was gradually decaying and falling to pieces. It now showed real deterioration and was little more than a system of magic, miracles, exorcism, nature worship,

idolatry and relic worship. The decay was within rather than without and continued till the eleventh century, when all that was left of Buddhism in India was wiped out by the Muslim invasion.

BUDDHISM SPREADS THROUGHOUT ASIA

Asoka's son, Mahinda Thero, brought Buddhism to Ceylon in the third century B.C., during the reign of Devanampiya Tissa. The tradition in Burma is that the glad tidings were brought by two merchants, Tapussa and Bhallika, who had listened to the Master whilst they were in India, and the Doctrine was formally introduced by Asoka's missionaries, Sona and Uttara Theros. The written Doctrine was introduced by Buddhaghosa, who had translated the Buddhist records in Ceylon from Sinhalese into Pali. Buddhism in Burma has absorbed *Nat* worship, the worship of Nature and of demons, which prevailed there before the advent of Buddhism.

Buddhism was introduced to China in the first century, thence to Korea in the fourth century, and from Korea to Japan in the sixth century. The Chinese are first Confucianists or Taoists and Buddhists only second, and the Japanese Buddhists are Shintoists ; nevertheless the humanising influence of Buddhism was deeply and widely felt in all these countries.

In the seventh century Buddhism was carried to Tibet where it became fused with the existing Tibetan religion called *Bon*, which was full of dreadful superstitions and savage practices like human sacrifices. Buddhism in Tibet today occupies a more dominant position than in other countries and is called Lamaism, which is described as one of the most bewildering polytheistic and idolatrous systems known to man.

In Java and Sumatra, Buddhism flourished alongside Saivism from the seventh century till the fifteenth century, when both religions were overthrown by the Muslim invasion ; but in the Island of Bali it still survives.

Buddhism became powerful in Cambodia from the ninth century, and it became the national religion of Siam from the founding of the Siamese Kingdom in the fourteenth century.

THE SINHALESE TRANSFORM BUDDHISM

When the Aryans invaded Ceylon, the Island was inhabited by tribes of aborigines ; some of them, the Nagas, worshipped serpents, others worshipped the spirits of dead chieftains which they called

yaku, and similar ghostly deities. Vijaya and his followers, and the immigrants who came after them in the pre-Buddhistic period, brought their own religions to Lanka. Some were Jains, others followed Makkhali Gosala and other Indian teachers who were contemporaries of the Buddha. All of them believed in the nature deities of the Vedas and in the Brahminical ritual and doctrines of Karma and Rebirth. But like the Indians of this time, they had other superstitious beliefs such as magic, astrology and the propitiation of a host of spirits—tree spirits, serpent gods, demons and spirits of the dead or *pretas*.

All these cults and religions continued to exist by the side of Buddhism, which was made the State religion by Devanampiya Tissa. The new religion began to grow rapidly in every direction. Within the next few centuries the Doctrine shone so much in glory, that it was reported in India : " The Tambapanni Island is adorned with garlands of shrines, is resplendent with yellow robes. There one may sit or lie down in any place one likes. Agreeable weather, suitable dwellings, agreeable men—all these are easy to get there."

But all did not remain smooth and tranquil for long. The Buddhism that Mahinda Thero brought to Ceylon was essentially a monastic religion. Yet in India, even at this time, it had developed into something more than a mere system of morality, for the ordinary layman had to be provided with something more concrete and visible than rules of behaviour or a way of life. By the third century B.C. objects of veneration had begun to take an important place in Buddhism.

The first of these were Cetiya or Stupas. There were two classes of stupas—those enshrining a relic of the Buddha's body or of an Arahant (*sarira-cetiya*), and those containing an article used by the Buddha (*paribhoga-cetiya*). The Buddha's begging-bowl and the Bo-tree belonged to the *paribhoga* group : a later group was the *uddissa-cetiya*, an object or image made to resemble the Buddha. The first stupa in Ceylon, the Thuparama, was built by Devanampiya Tissa. Stupa worship came to Lanka to stay. In later centuries as the country became more and more prosperous, stupas were built all over the land. In no other country did the stupa cult attain such importance, and nowhere else were so much wealth and skill expended on building and embellishing stupas as in Lanka.

Another cult that came to Lanka with Buddhism was Bo-tree worship. The worship of trees was a very ancient cult. Long ago in many countries trees were looked upon as having the gifts of immortality and wisdom. The sycamore was sacred in Egypt, the oak to

the Druids, the cedar to the Babylonians, and in Mohenjodaro, two thousand years before the birth of Buddhism, the *asvattha* or Bo-tree was sacred. Bo-tree worship and reverence for snakes were practised by Gonds, Santals, Bhils, Nagas and other primitive tribes of a pre-Aryan stock. Sculptures of tree and serpent worship discovered in pre-Buddhistic Mohenjodaro show a striking resemblance to those discovered among Buddhist sculptures at Udayagiri or Gaya. Buddhism flourished wherever these primitive tribes lived, and their primitive customs and observances were added to their new religion. The bringing to Ceylon by Sanghamitta Theri, sister of Mahinda Thero, of a branch of the Bo-tree under which the Buddha had attained Enlightenment, made the Sinhalese to adopt tree-worship and give this cult, like other cults which they absorbed, a new interpretation. The Buddhists venerated the Bo-tree not as a tree of wisdom or immortality, but because the Buddha had shown His gratitude to it as His only helper and protector in the time immediately before His Enlightenment.

The first century B.C. was a turning point in the history of Buddhism in Lanka. It was the century when the bhikkhus changed their attitude and became more interested in learning and in lay affairs than in leading a monastic life. It was the century when the Doctrine was set down in writing at Aluvihara. It was also the time when the first schism in the Sangha occurred and the Dhammaruci sect broke away from the Theravāda bhikkhus of the Mahavihara and established their headquarters in the Abhayagiri Vihara. In the third century the Abhayagiri Vihara became the seat of the Vaitulyan bhikkhus. The Vaitulya or Mahāyāna doctrine was brought to Lanka from the Andhra Kingdom of South India.

After the second century, Sinhalese Buddhism had come much in contact with Mahāyāna Buddhism of Nagarjunakonda, Ahichchatra and other Andhra Kingdoms. Nagarjuna, one of the great Mahāyāna teachers, lived in the latter part of the second century, and Sinhalese bhikkhus, who had gone to study in India, began to bring back the doctrines of Mahāyāna Buddhism, which the orthodox Sinhalese bhikkhus called the Vaitulya doctrine.

The Sinhalese, soaked in superstitious practices, did not embrace Buddhism without transforming it. They reduced the higher religion to the level of their understanding. Cults and rites which had existed before the advent of Buddhism were adopted to suit the new religion. The worship of the gods of the planets is a pre-Buddhist practice, and is built up on the theory that the gods of the planets control the lives of men. The horoscope of a man is the

essential thing for determining both the nature of the planetary influence which troubles him at a particular time with disease or some other evil, and also the nature of the particular ceremony necessary to remedy the evil. The planet god, who is the cause of the evil, is propitiated by certain ceremonies called *Bali* ceremonies.

Bali ceremonies to appease the gods of the planets, demons and evil spirits who were supposed to bring about diseases and plague and pestilence, were adapted to Buddhism. The exorciser invoked the Buddha's *anuhas* (divine patronage and power), to drive away evil spirits and he would go on enumerating the virtues of the Buddha to the rhythm of a drum and command: "Go out of him, thou evil spirit, the atmosphere of this place is now smothered by the *anuhas* of the Buddha."

The chanting of *pirith*, so popular even in our own day, in order to exorcise evil spirits and to protect a person or society from evil influences and pestilences, is also a pre-Buddhist practice adapted to Buddhism. It is a magical rite taken into Buddhist ritual. The *mandapa* or canopy, the water-pot, the sacred thread and incense are paraphernalia of magical rites.

During the Polonnaruwa period Hindu influences began to be felt in Sinhalese Buddhism, because some of the kings who usurped the throne of Lanka were Hindus: and kovils, as temples to the Hindu gods are known, were built alongside the Buddhist shrines for their and their followers' worship. At this time image-houses came more into prominence, and ritual that was practised in Hindu kovils gradually crept into Buddhist shrines.

With the introduction of ritual, the form of worship or veneration of the Buddha also changed. During the Anuradhapura period the devotees perambulated round the stupas or dagabas in procession carrying lighted torches, chanting *gathas* or verses glorifying the Buddha, and burning incense on stone altars erected in front of the stupas. With the introduction of images of the Buddha, the principal mode of veneration became the offering of flowers before the images, in emulation of the custom in ancient India of people taking flowers when they went to visit a great personage.

In the Kandyan period, when Hindu rulers supported Buddhism for State reasons, Hinduism began to influence Buddhism far more strongly than before. Hindu idols were placed under the same roof as the Buddha images, and as food was offered to the deities, worshippers made offerings of food to the Buddha images too, and as

Hindus adorned their gods with ornaments, offerings of jewellery were made to the Buddha images. Devalas, or temples dedicated to local deities or *Devas*, became closely associated with Buddhism. The priests of these Devalas were often Buddhists and were called Kapuvas, and the deities were propitiated by Buddhists with particular ceremonies. In matters of practical life the Buddhists sought the help of deities in their Devalas. In matters relating to the after-life they sought refuge in the Buddha.

The result of these and other practices was to bring about the deterioration of Buddhism, and the Doctrine which had been designed to be a way of living the good life soon became a religion full of rituals, cults and superstitious beliefs and practices, some of which were survivals of pre-Buddhistic beliefs. In Ceylon we find layer upon layer of different religious beliefs, with Buddhism covering the surface. The religion of the ordinary Sinhalese Buddhist today is much the same as that of his ancestors two thousand years ago. His mind is a strange mingling of conflicting and contradictory beliefs.

“No words are necessary,” writes Dr. Adikaram in his *Early History of Buddhism in Ceylon*. “to indicate how far these rituals are from the spirit of the original, pure and unadulterated teaching of the Buddha as exemplified, especially, in the *Dhammapada*. The growth of ritual was a necessary one if the faith was to have a hold on the masses. It was bound to come. But there is always this satisfaction that these new practices, though they formed a part of the common religion of the masses, did hardly affect the Pitakas which the Sinhalese monks zealously protected from all possible accretion.”

When Buddhism became international, the Sangha of each country adapted themselves to the social environment of those countries, and, as the centuries rolled on, gathered to themselves traditions, conventions, practices, institutions, usages etc., peculiar to themselves. How important to the survival of the religion was this “adaptation to the environment” of the respective countries, may be appreciated when we realise that, in those countries where no such adaptation took place, the Sangha was not able to stem the onrush of destructive forces which engulfed and swept them away completely. In some instances this adaptation to environment was confined to the field of social institutions as above indicated, the Doctrine being preserved in its purity; but in certain other countries the Sangha was compelled to extend the process of adaptation beyond social usages, and apply it to the Doctrine itself.

A religion adapting itself to the social environment of a country is not a phenomenon peculiar to Buddhism only. In fact, all other religions have been forced to it to maintain their survival. How Europe transformed Christianity was graphically described by Professor W. Macneile Dixon in the Gifford Lectures he delivered at the University of Glasgow.

"The truth is," declared that great teacher, "Christianity did not, as is commonly supposed, convert Europe. On the contrary, Europe transformed Christianity. It was an Eastern and ascetic creed of withdrawal from life rather than of participation in its fierce conflicts and competitions, and was so understood in the early centuries. But the Western races were not prepared to abandon the world. Their energies were too great, the natural man in them unsubduable. So it came about that Christianity came to terms with the West, and the accommodation resulted in an ill-defined compromise. The world, indeed, is not our home, which is God, they said, but we are here by His Will and inscrutable purpose. Let us meanwhile apply Christian principles to its amelioration. Thus it was that Europe translated Christianity into a world-reforming faith, which, losing its original character, and becoming entangled in the multifarious interests of mankind, evaporated into humanitarianism, and took upon itself an intellectual burden never contemplated by its Founder, a burden it was unfitted to bear. For the souls afraid, mortally afraid, of life—and how many they be, and have reason to be—Christianity came with healing in its wings. But to the lovers of life and the world, fascinated by the wide range of its vital and vivid interests, its sunlit landscape, the brave show of its human figures and enterprises, Christianity had no clear message."

The inflexible Protestantism of the primitive missionaries, with their fiery denunciations of heathendom, had been exchanged for the supple policy, the easy tolerance, the comprehensive charity of shrewd ecclesiastics, who clearly perceived that, if Christianity was to conquer the world, it could do so only by relaxing the too rigid principles of its Founder, by widening a little the narrow gate which leads to salvation. In this respect an instructive parallel might be drawn between the history of Christianity and the history of Buddhism. Both systems were in their origin essentially ethical reforms born of the generous ardour, the lofty aspirations, the tender compassion of their noble Founders, two of those beautiful spirits who appear at rare intervals on earth, like beings come from a better world to support and guide our weak and erring nature.

Both preached moral virtue as the means of accomplishing what they regarded as the supreme object of life, the eternal salvation of the individual being; though, by a curious antithesis, while one sought that salvation in a blissful eternity in the company of his Creator, the other totally denied the existence of such a Creator and sought final release from suffering in vanishing from creation.

But the austere ideals of sanctity which they inculcated were too deeply opposed, not only to the frailties, but to the natural instincts, of humanity, ever to be carried out in practice by more than a small number of disciples, who consistently renounced the ties of the family and the State in order to work out their own salvation in the still seclusion of the cloister or cell. If such faiths were to be nominally accepted by whole nations or even by the world, it was essential that they should first be modified or transformed so as to accord in some measure with the prejudices, the passions, the superstitions of the vulgar. This process of accommodation was carried out in after ages by followers who, made of less ethereal stuff than their Masters, were for that reason the better fitted to mediate between them and the common herd.

Thus, as time went on, the two religions, in exact proportion to their growing popularity, absorbed more and more of those baser elements which they had been instituted for the very purpose of suppressing. Such spiritual decadences are inevitable. The world cannot live at the level of its great men. To hold fully the teaching of the Buddha or Christ is hardly possible except in a cloistered life: the former—appealing, as it did, so strongly to the intellect—called also for keen brains and a long, willing education.

The mass of humanity dwell in the murky valleys far below these moral and intellectual summits. So the Teacher's successors have to lower the standards, if the religion is to spread. And, in lowering these, they must permit some of the very practices, which the Teacher has forbidden.

In the land of its birth, Buddhism became firmly enmeshed in the polytheism of its primitive religions. The Buddha became a god. He was subdivided into two, four, eight and finally into an infinity of gods and sons of gods. His Nirvana became a heaven more thickly populated than the Greek Olympus. And in many countries where, even today, Buddhism remains the predominant faith, it is being almost strangled by the accretions of centuries of superstitious ignorance. As always happens to great Teachers, the followers are unable to maintain the lofty standards of the Founder.

Because of the nobility of His character, the vastness of His vision, the depth of His compassion, and the profundity of His teachings, idealization of the Buddha's life was inevitable. Imaginative tales and outright myths crept into the most primitive accounts of Him, and extravagances, which disfigured the record and practice of Buddhism, crept into the genuine doctrine. These extravagances must be referred to that inevitable degradation which priesthoods always inflict upon great ideas committed to their charge. The power and sublimity of the Master's message should, however, be estimated by its influence, and not by the standards of its interpreters nor by those lazy and ceremonious elements of the Sangha.

The Buddha's message was new and of a singularly lofty nature. The doctrine of Samsara was not new; similarly, the theory of a gradual escape from the pains of Samsara through Karma was old, and it always aroused patient endurance rather than enthusiasm. The novelty lay in the escape through the doctrine of Non-Ego, or realization of the transience of the individual ego; but this in itself was in no sense lofty, and little liable to arouse moral enthusiasm, without its correlative, the doctrine of altruism, self-sacrifice and service implied in the Eightfold Way, as that of Non-Ego was in the first three of the Noble Truths. Whatever view of the nature of the Buddha's doctrine be taken, it must be sufficient to account for the enthusiastic reception which quickly gave it religious pre-eminence in India.

(2) *The Rise of Sectarian Buddhism*

IN a country where Brahminism had been for more than a thousand years the prevalent religion, Buddhism succeeded in undermining it, and in about two hundred years came to be recognized as the State religion of India. For the first time in history, from one corner of India a world religion appeared in reply to the question: Is the idea of God essential to a religion? One can regard the whole of Buddhism as an answer to this question and the answer is :—Man belongs to himself. The self is lord of the self. The power which created him is not God but his own doing. No God sits in judgment upon him except his own self, and his existence and destiny depend upon the will of no God who separates the sheep from the goats. They depend on his own actions.

The mainsprings of the success of Buddhism as a religion are the three jewels or *Tri-ratna* of (1) the Buddha; (2) the Dhamma

or the Doctrine; and (3) the Sangha or the Brotherhood. The singular personality and career of the Buddha, the rationalistic doctrine and the elevated morality He taught, and the institution of the Sangha with its spirit of discipline and selfless service He established appealed to the imagination of the people. The ideas of human brotherhood and equality of man, proclaimed for the first time to the world by the Buddha, resulted in the overthrow of the Brahminical dispensation—of gods and sacrifices and priests and castes.

Today, this great social revolution brought about by the Buddha has been nullified, and things have slipped back almost to where they started. Two thousand five hundred years have taken their toll of Buddhism. The Buddha, who denounced the gods, has Himself been elevated to the position of a god, and His images are worshipped in thousands of temples throughout the world with offerings of flowers, incense and food; His rationalistic religion has become largely an irrational one; and His Sangha has degenerated into an exploiting class worse than the Brahmin priests whom He overthrew. Followers who failed to grasp firmly the essential truths of the Doctrine have "devoured" the Buddha's "Revolt in the Temple." The note of selflessness, of revulsion from egotism, of altruism is absent from Buddhism today. The original characteristics of the Master's teaching have relapsed into the popular rituals, cults and superstitious beliefs from which it had arisen. What is the reason for this retrogression?

In the early days of any religion, the religious message given to the people was inspired by a dynamic power of reconstruction, first of the individual, then of society and then of the world. That which mostly appealed to people in a new religion was the element of reconstruction which that religion contained. Buddhism had such a powerful appeal in India because of its spirit of tolerance and compassion and the new elements of reconstruction it contained. When a religion began it was a splendid centre of creative energy, but soon after the passing away of the Founder, the religion began to change its character. Positive or active religion was the earlier form of it, full of the teachings of its Founder, and the negative or passive side of it was crystallized by its forms when its original intense vitality seemed to have faded away.

Negative religion merely carried on the ancient form, and positive religion was its creative element. Each religion had its positive and negative aspects. What was it that made Buddhism such a world force in the past and why is it not a world force today? Let us examine the principal elements in the message of

the Buddha which were so attractive to the orthodox Indian of the time. The first characteristic of Buddhism was its tenderness to all that lives. Brahminism had from early ages inculcated charity to man, but it recognized animal sacrifices side by side with its lofty ethics. The Buddha had pointed out that man's humanity should be so boundless as to include even the animal kingdom. The spirit of violence was utterly contrary to Buddhism.

The second great characteristic of Buddhism was its non-recognition of ceremonial which was obligatory in Brahminism. The Buddha had shown that all this was mere waste of force for anyone who understood the meaning of life. That was a wonderful message full of life-giving, liberating forces. The third element which made Buddhism still unique was the utter refusal of the Buddha to recognize caste in any form. He stood not for a caste or community but was a Teacher of all men. One other element of positive Buddhism was the absolute freedom given to the Buddhist to examine every problem for himself.

Soon after the Buddha passed away, negative Buddhism began to appear. The first symbol of this was the gathering of His ashes from the funeral pyre, erecting stupas or dagabas to enshrine them and making these places of pilgrimage and worship. The message of the Buddha was realised through a daily inner life and struggle in which one was engaged. But all that was slowly put aside and people substituted in its place pilgrimages, worship in temples and other ceremonial acts—all pious, beautiful things in themselves, but negative Buddhism nevertheless. The essential thing is not going to the temple but the inner control of oneself. One thought of love, the Buddha had said, was better than a hundred measures of rice given in charity.

AGE OF INTELLECTUAL FERMENT

In the vast continent of India, man's impulse to believe in many gods had free scope. The life of the people was governed by gods and ghosts who had the power to injure as well as to bless. Some believed in an Almighty God who could work miracles, but even he was subject to human frailties, a revengeful war-lord who interfered too much with the world and looked upon his worshippers as slaves. Miracles were the common belief of the day. Comets, eclipses and conjunctions of the stars were thought to presage ill. Famine, pestilence and other calamities were believed to be caused by the wrath of the gods. Over all men's activities there hung the thundercloud of an angry God or gods.

Much damage was being done to man's moral nature by this superstitious belief in God and gods. Many good men did devil's work believing that it had divine sanction or pleased the gods. People were ignorant of the natural consequences of evil actions. Karma or the universal prevalence of law, as taught in the Upanishads, was known at this time, but it was not a living belief and did not help to shape the lives of men. The Upanishads were a sealed book to the common people. Their teaching was interpreted in different ways by men.

Many theories which were independent of the Vedic tradition arose, and there were various schools of philosophy. There were the Niganthas or fetter-free; the Samanas or ascetics who did not belong to the Brahminical order; those who sought peace of soul in the renunciation of the world; those who practised self-mortification and denied themselves nourishment for long periods; those who tried to attain spiritual abstraction; the dialecticians, the controversialists, the materialists and the sceptics; and those who were wise in their own conceit. It was an age of intellectual ferment and speculative chaos, full of inconsistent theologies and vague wranglings. The "Brahmajala Sutta" of the *Dīgha Nikāya* mentions sixty-two theories that were prevalent at the time of the Buddha.

Each school of thought propounded its own theory of the world and way of salvation. This metaphysical company had—like many other religious or social creeds—its lunatic fringe. Some of them, dressed in rags or only in a coat of ashes, squatted cross-legged staring at their navels. Some of them kept gazing into the face of the sun until they went gradually blind. Some lay nude, year after year, upon beds of iron spikes. Some buried themselves in the earth up to their necks. Some held up their arms into the air until birds built nests in the palms of their hands. In their search for virtue they imposed upon themselves vows of eternal silence, starved themselves and denied themselves sleep, went naked and in chains. Some thought it a sin to enjoy their daily bread, to use pillows, to shave their faces, to take pleasure in music or poetry, to indulge in laughter or wear a cheerful countenance. They associated filth with sanctity, and confused rude manners with goodness, despised learning and the arts, and made of life the hell they endeavoured to escape.

When the Buddha saw these things, His heart was filled with pity for men. He was sad that they should play the fool for nothing. He raised His voice in indignant protest against ignorance and

superstition. The sight of men remaining slaves to penance and priesthood, sacrifice and sacrament, touched Him to the quick. So he resolved to revolutionize existing society and bring about a complete rebirth of mankind.

Man was loving God and had forgotten all about his brother man. He would roll in the dust to obtain favours from God; he would give his wealth to the priests to find him a place in heaven; he would even sacrifice his life for the glory of God; but he exploited, maltreated and was pitiless to his brother man. It was an exploiting society, supported by a caste-ridden hierarchy of priests, that the Buddha found in India.

He therefore worked out a programme to bring about the transformation of society. The Buddha felt that the world would be better for the triumph of natural law over supernaturalism. To a priest-ridden people He preached a doctrine which required neither an intermediary with Heaven nor a saviour from the devil. By dethroning God as a myth, dismissing the soul as a phantom and immortality as a hallucination and by the irresistible logic of His doctrine and the force of His own exemplary life, He broke down the power of the priest. By announcing a doctrine which proclaimed that each man could gain salvation for himself and by himself without the mediation of priests or reference to gods, He increased the respect for human nature and raised the tone of morality. "It is a foolish idea to suppose that another can cause us happiness or misery." (*Bodhicaryavatara*).

The Buddha found that the cause of the malady was in the hearts and intellects of men. Their theistic ideology led them to slavery in practical life. The root of all the world's troubles was in ignorance. The Buddha organized the Sangha, the members of which, whilst themselves observing the rules of conduct laid down by Him, were to preach the Doctrine far and wide. "Go ye forth, O Brethren, for the good of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the happiness of the many, for the good, benefit and happiness of gods and men. Let not two go by one way. Preach, O Brethren, the Dhamma, excellent in the beginning, excellent in the middle and excellent in the end, both in the spirit, and the letter. Proclaim the righteous life, altogether perfect and pure," was the Buddha's exhortation to His Sangha. It was a society formed by a great organizing mind for the perpetuation and propagation of His teaching. That was the true work of the Sangha—to preserve and to carry out propaganda in His doctrine, to tell people about the new revolution in the affairs of men and to instruct

them how to put the theory of the Teaching into practise. The ascetics of the Brahminical religion did not have any such organized body.

The Sangha as established by the Buddha was an organized brotherhood of earnest-minded men—and later of women also—who had dedicated their lives to the service of mankind. They were not intended to be a priesthood with power to administer the religion as the Brahmins administered theirs. They were not mediators between God and man, but only leaders. The work of the Sangha was that of teacher and missionary, and if they had to bind themselves more strictly than the ordinary layman to conform to the requirements of the Buddha's Law, it was for their own good alone. Except by precept and the example of a good and selfless life, they were unable to set the standard to their fellow beings.

The Sangha was not a society of self-centred ascetics seeking personal salvation; their principal function was to liquidate ignorance amongst their unfortunate brethren. The Buddha could be considered the first reformer to introduce that "pearl of great price,"—free education—to the masses. The Sangha was not to be an exploiting class like the Brahmin priests. The strict rules that the Buddha laid down for them were to make them take for their needs the minimum from society; in other words, to live according to the Communist principle of "to each according to his needs and from each according to his ability."

The Buddha lived and died, but the Brahmin priest began to live again in the Hindu priest. To reassert himself this priest had to explain away the Buddha. He knew that a denial of the teaching of the Buddha would be rejected by the country as false; so he adopted the Buddha as one of the Avatars of his deity. Without the guidance of the Buddha, the Sangha degenerated. Unconsciously, may be, they began to adopt some of the practices of the Hindu priest.

Buddhism disappeared from India because it ultimately became indistinguishable from other flourishing forms of Hinduism, Vaishnavism, Saivism and Tantric belief. It grew weaker as it spread. It opened the floodgates to all forms of superstition, to mystic forms of animism and to stories of magic, clairvoyance and ghost-seeing. The disciples surrounded with cheap marvels and wonders the lonely figure with a serene soul. To make a god of Him stories were invented. Under the overpowering influence of these sickly imaginings, the moral teachings of the Buddha were almost hid from view. The Buddhist bhikkhus lost their old

apostolic fervour. They became as bad as any priesthood, not mendicants devoted to a pure and selfless life, but fat priests with opulent temples. "Buddhism perished in India," says C. M. Jennings in *The Vedantic Buddhism of the Buddha*, "because it failed to retain its original characteristics and relapsed into the popular, ritualistic, and individualistic beliefs from which it had risen. Among its losses was the ideal of heaven on earth, the peace of Nibbana attained by the saint during this life."

Pioneers of progress have been regarded in every age as the champions of revolt and rebellion. By putting spiritual brotherhood in place of hereditary priesthood, personal merit in place of distinctions of birth, logical reason in place of revelation of religion, moral life in place of ritual and prayer, and the perfected man above God and gods, the Buddha provoked the wrath of the priests who regarded Him as an anti-social force. What made the Buddha an unpardonable heretic in the eyes of the priests was the social revolution which He preached. It is an old saying that revolutions devour their own children; but in the Buddha's "Revolt in the Temple" His own 'children' devoured the revolution, a social revolt which, Sir Hari Singh Gour says, "reinforced the peoples' power of self-help and self-reliance" and gave India the "master key of social synthesis."

THE THERAVADA AND THE MAHAYANA SCHOOLS

The greatest calamity that befell the Buddha's religion was its division, soon after His death, into a number of sects which afterwards crystallized into the two principal schools of the Theravāda (The Doctrine of the Elders), and the Mahāyāna (The Higher Vehicle). The Theravāda or the older school called the Mahāyānists "Vaitulyans" or heretics, whilst the Mahāyānists dubbed the Theravādins the "Hinayanists," or the followers of the lower deal.

The gist of the Mahāyāna teaching was as follows :

- (1) A belief in Bodhisattvas.
- (2) A code of ethics which teaches that everybody must do good in the interest of humanity as a whole, and make over to others all the merits that he may acquire by his virtues.
- (3) A doctrine that the Buddhas are supernatural beings.
- (4) Various schools of metaphysics.
- (5) A canon composed in Sanskrit.

(6) Worship of images. Elaborate ritual. Reliance on formulae and charms.

(7) A doctrine that salvation can be gained by having faith in the Buddha, and calling on His name.

How greatly this religion differed from the teaching of the Founder! The doctrine of salvation by faith instead of by works, the belief in supernatural beings, the reliance on images, ritual, and charms, and the abstruse metaphysical discussions, all these were fundamental departures from the life as lived, from the word as spoken, by the Buddha Himself. Stcherbatsky in his work, *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvana*, writes:

“ The Mahāyāna is a truly new religion, so radically different from Early Buddhism that it exhibits as many points of contact with later Brahminical religions as with its own predecessor. . . . It never has been fully realized what a radical revolution had transformed the Buddhist Church when the new spirit—which, however, was for a long time lurking in it—arrived at full eclosion in the first centuries A.D. When we see an atheistic, soul-denying philosophic teaching of a path to personal final deliverance, consisting in an absolute extinction of life and a simple worship of the memory of its human founder—when we see it superseded by a magnificent High Church with a Supreme God surrounded by a numerous pantheon and a host of saints; a religion highly devotional, highly ceremonious and clerical, with an ideal of universal salvation of all living creatures, a salvation by the divine grace of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, a salvation not in annihilation but in eternal life—we are fully justified in maintaining that the history of religions has scarcely witnessed such a break between new and old within the pale of what nevertheless continues to claim common descent from the same religious founder.”

Quoting the above passage in his *A Study of History*, Arnold J. Toynbee remarks: “ It is a controversial question, which perhaps can never be conclusively answered, whether the Buddhist philosophy—described in this passage from the work of a Russian scholar—against which the Mahāyāna was in revolt, was a replica or a misrepresentation of the personal teaching of Siddhartha Gautama himself.”

The teaching of the new sect, self-styled the Mahāyāna or Higher Vehicle, was a revolt against the particularism, or effort

after personal salvation, into which the older Buddhist schools, collectively called by the Mahāyānists the Hinayāna or the Lower Vehicle, had relapsed, and in this respect the new movement was an instinctive return to the Buddha's fundamental principle, absolute altruism. In retaining a hold upon realism, however, the Theravāda remained truer to the original teaching of the Buddha.

The Theravāda is the doctrine that exists now in southern Buddhist countries like Ceylon, Burma, Siam, Cambodia and Laos and is also known as Southern Buddhism. The Mahāyāna is the doctrine of the northern Buddhist countries such as Tibet, China, Korea, Japan and Viet-Nam and is known as Northern Buddhism. A careful examination of the Theravāda and the Mahāyāna books shows that something of the original Doctrine had gone to both, but owing to antagonism each school denied the authenticity of the other's teachings. After this split in Buddhism neither school had possession of the complete Doctrine, and to make up for the deficiencies, they evidently introduced their own.

The highest ideal set before man by the Buddha was supreme knowledge (*bodhi*). The attainment of perfect wisdom or enlightenment and Nirvana are, among all Buddhists of the Theravāda as well as the Mahāyāna, exact synonyms. The Theravāda made this attainable by only a few through the life of a bhikkhu. They adopted the Arahāt path and tried to achieve the goal in the solitude of their cells, segregated from the common life of men. They thus developed a colourless religion where the individual's aim was the selfish pursuit of personal salvation. The Bodhisattva path was taught by the Mahāyāna to counteract this tendency to a cloistered, placid, inert monastic life. The Mahāyāna taught that every man could become a Bodhisattva and attain salvation by the practice of virtue and devotion to the Buddha. It developed the Bodhisattva doctrine of helping and serving others whilst working for one's own salvation.

The Theravāda considered the comprehension of the Four Truths sufficient for the attainment of Nirvana or escape from sorrow (*dukkha*). The Mahāyānists pointed out that mere knowledge of the Four Truths was not enough for the Buddha's goal, and took up a new attitude towards the problem of *dukkha*. The Theravādins emphasised the fact of pain and sorrow so persistently that it tended to generate a kind of morbid cowardice in the Arahāt, who learned to avoid pain at all costs and under all circumstances. But the Mahāyānists introduced a new and revolutionary idea that pain should be welcomed with joy if it is endured in the

service of others. This was a thorough revaluation of all values, and the whole basis of Buddhism, theoretical and practical, was radically altered. Emphasis was now placed not on *dukkha* but on *karuṇā* (compassion.). The new ideal was: "Pain endured for the sake of others is happiness." (*par-artha dukkham sukham*).

The Mahāyānists accuse the Arahāt of selfishness and egotism, because he strives and struggles only for his own liberation from sorrow instead of working for the liberation and happiness of all beings. A Rodhisattva, who follows the ideal of the Mahāyāna, aims at the highest good for himself and also for others. An Arahāt is rightly or wrongly represented by the Mahāyānist authors as a self-complacent, self-regarding and unsocial recluse, who is intent only on solving his own personal problem and does not think of others. A Bodhisattva, on the contrary, thinks both of himself and others. A Bodhisattva helps all beings not only to attain the spiritual goal of Nirvana, but also to obtain the more material advantage of happiness and welfare in the world. The austere unworldliness of the old ideal is abandoned in favour of a more humane aim.

A Bodhisattva wishes to help all beings to attain Nirvana. He must therefore refuse final release for himself, as he cannot apparently render any services to living beings after his own liberation. This is his great sacrifice for others. He has taken the great vow: "I shall not enter into final release before all beings have been liberated." He has girt on his spiritual armour and wishes to continue his work as a Bodhisattva by being born again and again. He does not realise the highest liberation for himself, as he cannot abandon other beings to their fate. The Mahāyāna thus preached the ideal of compassionate Buddhahood for all as opposed to cold Arahātship of the Theravāda.

With all their differences, the canonical works of both schools show a general agreement in the fundamentals, for example the Four Noble Truths, which indicate that they came from a common unwritten tradition, gradually diverging as it came to be preserved and commented on by different schools of repeaters. If Buddhism is to survive hereafter, a synthesis of these two based on the original principles of the Buddha's teachings, the doctrine of pure altruism or non-egoism, must be made. The ideal of Nirvana, or the extinction of selfish desire in this life, as taught by the Buddha, is not a merely negative and passive state of extinction, but a positive and active condition implying love, compassion and sympathy, as well as the final virtue of serenity.

Its object is neither repose nor heaven, but Universal Love. As the "Chakkanipata Sutta" of the *Anguttara Nikaya* says, it is a state in which one no longer thinks "such an one is superior to me." In other words it is not egoistic or individualistic, but altruistic or social. It aims not at ascetic purity and isolation from the world, but at Social Service.

The Buddha's teaching was a revolt from the pious self-seeking of extreme asceticism; herein lies the key. The Buddha's later followers reverted, naturally enough, to the effort after personal salvation, as also to personal worship and ultimately to polytheism—to *bhakti* (adoration), and so to Hinduism, against an earlier form from which Buddhism originally had revolted. To find again the original teachings of the Buddha, it is necessary to reverse their steps—to discard polytheism and the hierarchy of heaven, to discard personal adoration, and return to the fundamental doctrine of selfless well-doing without a thought of reward.

The Eightfold Way is directed to the attainment of Nirvana, and the Ordination formula promises the complete end of sorrow (*sabha-dukkha-nissarana*). The end of sorrow is Nirvana in this life. In the "Tikanipatha" of the *Anguttara Nikaya*, the Buddha propounds an ethical doctrine where He speaks of the Three Fires, the Four *Brahma-viharas*, and the consolations of the true believer, including assurance of attaining a blissful place in the next world if such there is (*sace kho pana atthi paraloko*), and if there is not (*sace kho pana natthi paraloko*), then in this life arising from well-doing. The Buddha taught that out of desire and an exaggerated sense of individuality arose the sorrows which accompany man from birth to death, and the exaggerated sense of individuality arose from delusion. It is not difficult to see how so simply realistic a view of life might be converted to the uses of those of His later followers who inclined towards the ancient Hindu doctrines.

The growth of such doctrines among the sects of the later Buddhists of the Theravāda, as also the development of purely idealistic sects of the Mahāyāna school occurred from about the beginning of the first century of the Christian era. The inspiring motive of the Theravāda is a sort of world hatred and running away from the duties of life. Its interpretation of Arahatsip as personal salvation is not appealing. The *sabha-dukkha-nissarana*, escape from sorrow, is confined to one's own sorrow only and does not include the sorrows of others as well. We cannot help feeling that the ideal of the Arahata, the perfect egotist, who is useless to others, is untrue to the real personality of the Buddha, the great lover of

mankind. The Theravāda ideal, says Prof. Radhakrishnan, "seems to be summed up in the words of Ibsen: 'There are actually moments when the whole history of the world appears to me like one great shipwreck, and the only important thing seems to be to save oneself.'"

The popularity of the teaching of the Buddha was mostly due to its offering an immediate escape from the sorrows of life. In the age of the Buddha men of keen intellect and deep feeling were asking: What does all this weary round of existence mean? And the Buddha addressed his appeal to the men who were longing for a way of escape, a resort to Nirvana here and now itself, the peace of mind of self-forgetful activity. The world with all its sufferings seems adapted to the growth of goodness. The Buddha does not preach the mere worthlessness of life or resignation to an inevitable doom. His is not a doctrine of despair. He asks us to revolt against evil and attain a life of finer quality, an Arahata state.

Originally a bhikkhu went forth as a preacher and taught the Doctrine to the people. The Buddha had exhorted His disciples to wander and preach the Truth for the welfare and liberation of the multitude, as He loved His fellow creatures and had compassion on them. Such was the ideal of the bhikkhu, as it was understood during the three centuries after the Buddha's death. But it seems that the Sangha began to neglect certain important aspects of it in the second century B.C., and degenerated from the lofty ideal set before them by the Master. They became too self-centred and contemplative, and did not evince the old zeal for missionary activity among the people. They cared only to "save their own skins." They were indifferent to the duty of teaching and helping all human beings. They became cold and aloof, a saintly and serene, but an inactive and indolent monastic order. They ceased to exist or existed in an undefinable, inconceivable sphere somewhere or nowhere, and were lost to the world of men as friends and helpers.

The lack of warmth and the passionlessness of the Theravāda ideal are not inspiring. Disgust of life does not represent all that is substantial in the life of man. In the "Khaggavisana Sutta," family life and social intercourse are strictly prohibited, and we cannot reach our goal by means of a life of love and activity. "To him who leads a social life, affections arise and the pain which follows affection," says the *Sutta Nipata*. Again, a wise man "should avoid married life as if it were a burning pit of live coals."

The *Visuddhi Magga* tells us that "meditation in the cremation ground brings many exquisite virtues." These ideas cannot be reconciled with the Buddha's original teachings, of which even the first discourse declared that asceticism was "gloomy, unworthy and profitless."

This tendency towards spiritual selfishness amongst the Sangha is exhibited in the later Pali literature. The *Dhammapada* exalts self-control, meditation and absence of hatred, but it also exhibits an attitude of contempt for the common people and remoteness from their interests. Most poets of the *Theragatha* only strike the note of personal salvation; they seldom speak of the duty of helping others. The author of the *Milinda Panha* declares that an Arahata should aim at the destruction of his own pain and sorrow. Some of the Sangha thought that one could be very wise and holy through personal self-culture without fulfilling the equally important duty of teaching and helping others.

From early Vedic times there had been in India ascetic tempers who had cut themselves adrift from the responsibilities of life and wandered free. The Brahminical codes recognized the right of these to sever themselves from the duties of life and the observance of rites. Many such beliefs and ascetic practices have been tacked on to the rationalistic Buddhist principles and ideals. Stress is laid on monasticism instead of the good life. Buddhism has been transformed into a system in which the celibate life is given paramount importance and the household life passes for something low (*hira*). There is no consistency in this teaching, for, according to the *Majjhima Nikaya*, a man may attain Nirvana without being a bhikkhu.

The numerous accounts of conversions in the Pitakas, show clearly that the converts of the Buddha became Arahats, that is attained to Nirvana during their life on earth. The Buddhist tradition considers that the Sangha, or community of bhikkhus, at first consisted exclusively of Arahats, and large bodies of men attained to this state at the same time. Yasa attained Nirvana as a layman, but thereupon became a bhikkhu. It may be pointed out further that, in the *Maha-vagga* narrative, Yasa's father, the merchant prince, similarly attained salvation, but remained a layman. The *Maha-vagga* describes the conversion of King Bimbisara in practically the same terms. The case of the Buddha's father, Siddhodana, is similar. The idea that salvation was the monopoly of the Sangha was evidently a later notion, cultivated for priestly reasons, natural enough to a clerical order, but foreign to the mind

of the great Teacher. The Buddha did not call men to the homeless life in order that they might live totally aloof from human society, but in order that they might serve the world by living a life of self-forgetful activity.

The ascetic virtues cannot flourish side by side with the social and domestic. If you choose to be a recluse, you cannot be a lover of life. A hermit can know nothing of love or friendship nor can the social worker devote his strength to the advancement of knowledge. True asceticism is not indifference to the suffering of the world, but the building up of a silent centre even in the furious activity of life. We must be spiritual enough to possess ourselves in the noise of the blatant world, and not merely in the peace and silence of the cell of the monastery. By its abstract and negative tendencies the Theravāda became the incarnation of dead thought and the imprisonment of spirit. It gives us neither a warm faith for which to live nor a real ideal for which to work.

All this was the result of Brahminical accretions on the simple teaching of the Buddha and represents in reality a fall from that great Teacher's aim. These aberrations were surely infections from the superstitious environment. Detachment from the outer world always leads to a regression towards, or a revival of, juvenile or infantile states. As Amiel points out, the pleasure of the lonely, contemplative life ending in the blank trances "is deadly, inferior, in all respects, to the joys of action, to the sweetness of love, to the beauty of enthusiasm, or to the sacred savour of accomplished duty."

The Buddhism taught by some members of our Sangha is downright pessimism. They lay stress on the presence of suffering in the world to the exclusion of all else. Life, in their eyes, is a bleak and dismal procession to the grave. This emphasis on sorrow is a disastrous way of teaching the Buddha's Way of Life. The Sangha, by parodying sorrow and suffering, is tying, what are virtually mill-stones, round the necks of the people, and it becomes a great strain on the State, whose duty it is to make the people stand erect as men, and behave as men. Buddhism does, indeed, dwell much on suffering, but it does so in order to explain the way of deliverance from suffering. It goes further than Christianity in this respect, for it teaches that man, unaided, can effect his own deliverance. There is no pessimism here.

A section of the Sangha teaches the faithful to rest their hopes on charity (*dāna*) and gifts to them. It preaches that a man is born either rich or poor according to what he gives; those who have

plenty of wealth are fortunate because they had given freely to charity in their past births. This sordid doctrine, that virtue deserves a material reward, is not Buddhism. It is the kind of preaching that makes people amass wealth and oppress the poor with unpricked conscience: their wealth, they are convinced, is a sign of their generosity in previous lives, the other fellow's poverty, of moral turpitude. The Sangha has invented the doctrine of transference of merit, and preaches that the right means of helping the dead is to make gifts to themselves. It encourages the erection of useless structures as places and objects of worship, all with an eye to one's own comfort and temporal gain. Today, the masses of the Buddhists are addicted to the ceremonies and observances prescribed by those who live on food provided by the faithful and whom the Buddha once described as "tricksters, droners out of holy words for pay, diviners, exorcists, ever hungering to add gain to gain."

The Ceylon Sangha, as a whole, have degenerated and no longer are they leading the selfless lives the Master exhorted them to do. The main reasons for the deterioration are the selfish motives and considerations of the bhikkhus themselves, their self-interest, greed and ignorance, and their failure to adhere to the principles of the teaching of the Master. The Siam *Nikaya*, the principal sect of the Sangha of Ceylon, is not only caste-ridden but also class conscious. They grant the *Upasampada* or higher Ordination to one particular caste only, and the Malwatta Chapter, which controls the largest number of bhikkhus, has always been dominated by Kandyan monks, although the largest number and the most learned bhikkhus of this sect are of the Low-country. *Nayakaships*, or High Priesthoods, are sold for considerations, and in some of these Chapters the bhikkhus are simple folk without any learning and not a few of them of a very low standard of morality. During the times of the Sinhalese kings they, as Protectors of the Faith, purged the Order of the undesirables who had crept into the ranks of the Sangha. The *Mahavamsa* mentions several instances when this was done; but now, without royal patronage and the guidance and supervision of a universally accepted leader, the Sangha is daily deteriorating and one shudders to think of the fate of the Order in the coming generations.

(3) *What the Future Demands*

IN the face of this sad picture, it is not strange that we should ask ourselves: "Has Buddhism failed?" But our times paint

another picture. In it we see millions of men and women who are showing in their daily lives unselfishness, generosity, self-sacrifice, tolerance and compassion. These people are reflecting the Buddha's spirit. Yet, many of them have no temple affiliations, since theirs is fundamentally a religion of deeds, not of creeds; expressed in life, not in words. As we view this picture we say with renewed faith: "Buddhism has not failed; the Order to which the Buddha entrusted His doctrine may have failed, but Buddhism has not lost its hold on human life today."

Nevertheless if this vital force for good is to be conserved, Buddhism must have a new birth. Let us picture, for a moment, this reborn Buddhism. It would be a Social Religion. Its terms of admission would be the acceptance of the brotherhood of all mankind. It would welcome to its fellowship all those who are striving to live useful and worthy lives. For admission within its fold, it would pronounce dogma, ritual and creed all non-essential. A life, not a creed, would be the test. As its first concern it would encourage a Buddhist way of life lived seven days a week, fifty-two weeks a year, not only on *Poya* days and on special occasions; the *Dhamma* is a way of life, meant to be followed every day, to influence every activity of ours. It would be a religion of all the people, the rich and the poor, the high and the low—a true kingdom of righteousness.

The sponsors of this revitalised religion, the Sangha, would pursue not a will-o'-the-wisp Nirvana secluded in the cells of their monasteries, but a Nirvana attained here and now by a life of self-forgetful activity. Theirs will not be a selfish existence, pursuing their own salvation, whilst living on the charity of others, but an existence full of service and self-sacrifice. To bring about this transformation the Sangha must be re-organised and the bhikkhus trained not only in Buddhist theory but also in some form of Social Service in order that they may acquire a personal knowledge of practical problems. Thus they would live in closer touch with humanity, would better understand and sympathize with human difficulties, and would exert their influence as much in living as in preaching.

The Sangha must be reformed and its lost prestige restored. The need for such an effort in a country with a predominantly Buddhist population will not be questioned by anyone. It is not an attempt to bring the breath of life to a relic of the past. There is an unbroken tradition which is woven into the pattern of the country's history. But today it is realised only too well that the Ceylon Sangha is not playing its proper part in the spiritual, social and

cultural life of the people. It has lost its grip and is not only not pulling its weight, but is daily deteriorating materially and spiritually. The material side can automatically be corrected if only it devotes proper attention to the spiritual side.

There is in Ceylon today much talk of Buddhism being our "greatest asset": of treating it as the "only remedy for all the political 'isms'"; of using it "to put Ceylon on the map"; of taking it "to the West"; and of offering it as "a new way of life to the world." Have those who use these slogans ever thought what kind of Buddhism they mean to offer to a distracted world? If by "Buddhism" they mean the kind of Buddhism which is practised in everyday Ceylon and dosed out to the people from the temples, loud-speakers and the Broadcasting Service, we think there is very little likelihood of that Buddhism taking root in the West, or anywhere else, in these days of better education and increased knowledge.

Asoka took Buddhism not only to the West but to the whole of the then known world; but it was principally in Ceylon that it took root. Other missions that he despatched failed. What was the reason for this set-back? Either those missionaries who took the Message failed to interpret it as an acceptable one to the particular people to whom it was delivered, or they failed to adapt themselves to the environment of those countries.

A modern instance of this failure is available in the case of a recent missionary enterprise, sponsored by the Maha Bodhi Society, to introduce Buddhism in England. It was not successful. One of the main reasons for its failure was the establishment of a Buddhist *Vihara* or place of worship in London. Buddhism is an intellectual doctrine, and its primary appeal is to people of intellect and of deep culture. These are the very people to whom the idea of a *Vihara*, or cathedral with statues and statue-worship, is irrelevant and indeed repellent.

The modern revolt against conventional religion is a sign of the quickening of conscience. Great social changes are generally brought about by a few individuals who throw aside their prejudices and get at the reality of things. Every moral reformer is an immoral force in the eyes of the conservative. Anyone who insists on doing differently from established custom is immoral, though his immorality acquires ethical value in the next generation and becomes a part of the tradition in another. The Buddha was the greatest moral reformer ever. He not only rebelled against the reactionary forces of His time, but when He said: "Do not go

merely by hearsay or tradition, but what has been handed down from olden time, by cherished opinions and speculations, nor believe merely because I am your Master. But, when you yourselves have seen that a thing is evil and leads to harm and suffering, then you should reject it. And when you see that a thing is good and blameless, and leads to blessing and welfare, then you should adopt such a thing"—He exhorted His followers to be rebels all the time.

All progress is due to the rebels, and it is to those few who are in advance of the highest life-conception of the time that all progress is due. No progress is possible if religion and ethics are held as sacrosanct; by showing that all things are subject to the law of change (*anicca*), and asking man to adapt himself to changing conditions, the Buddha brought the highest freedom to man.

The Buddha preached to a feudal society. Although that social structure was to last two thousand three hundred years more, the Buddha foresaw that it would yield place to other forms of society. Two hundred years ago feudal society gave way to capitalist society, and this system too is now giving way to yet another form of society. We are living through a civilization that is changing, following the law of change. We are today in the midst of two worlds, one dying and another struggling to be born; humanity is on the march towards the building of a lasting peace.

"The old days were days of faith," says Jawaharlal Nehru in his *Glimpses of World History*, "The wonderful temples and mosques and cathedrals of past centuries could never have been built but for the overpowering faith of the architects and builders and people generally. The very stones that they reverently put one on top of the other, or carved in beautiful designs, tell us of this faith. . . . But the days of that faith are gone, and gone with them is that magic touch in stone. Thousands of temples and mosques and cathedrals continue to be built, but they lack the spirit that made them live during the Middle Ages. There is little difference between them and the commercial offices, which are so representative of our age

"Our age is a different one ; it is an age of disillusion, of doubt and uncertainty and questioning. We can no longer accept many of the ancient beliefs and customs ; we have no more faith in them. . . So we search for new ways, new aspects of the truth more in harmony with our environment. And we question each other and debate and quarrel and evolve any number of 'isms' and philosophies. . . ."

Ancient man was not merely born into a society composed of other men like himself, but into a society of men and gods. Those gods

and spirits have reached us by a tradition presented by the different creeds, and we are born into a world of which they seem to be members. The passage of these concepts through history has been marked by many changes, but whether we turn to Asia or Europe, we cannot fail to note one constant factor—the whole apparatus of the supernatural has been used to justify those inequalities of social life that nowadays seem to be removable. Nor is this surprising if it is the case that the term “god” originated as a psychological projection of the ruling class, and that the abasement and submission which belong to worship—an attitude never found in primitive, propertyless communities of the totemic type, as Frazer demonstrates—is simply an exaggerated copy of the submission exacted by rulers. In other words, the hierarchy in heaven reflects the hierarchy on earth.

The particular situation that confronts the religions of modern civilization is this. The concept of God has reached the limits of its usefulness; it cannot evolve further. Supernatural powers were created by man to carry the burden of religion. From diffuse magic *mana* to personal spirits, from spirits to gods, from gods to God—so, crudely speaking, the evolution has gone. The particular phase of that evolution which concerns us is that of gods. In one period of our civilization the gods were necessary fictions, useful hypotheses by which to live. The advance of natural science, logic, and psychology have brought us to a stage at which God is no longer a useful hypothesis. Natural science has pushed God into an ever greater remoteness, until his function as ruler and dictator disappears and he becomes a mere First Cause or vague general principle.

Religion, to continue as an element of first-rate importance in the life of the community, must drop the idea of God or at least relegate it to a subordinate position, as has happened to the magical element in the past. God, equally with gods, angels, demons, spirits, and other small spiritual fry, is a human product, arising inevitably from a certain kind of ignorance and a certain degree of helplessness with regard to man's external environment. With the substitution of knowledge for ignorance in this field, and the growth of control, both actually achieved and realized by thought as possible, God is simply fading away.

God-religions have lost the moral leadership of the world, and there is a sense of bewilderment. There is a widespread instinctive feeling that deep changes are on the way, and men are looking for release from the horrors of the present and the menace of the future.

They are prepared to suffer if by their sacrifice their children will enter a world from which war and poverty and unemployment are driven out; but to go back to the old grim cycle of uneasy peace and war, shortlived boom and slump, is everywhere felt to be an intolerable prospect. And the meaning of this is that we have reached the historical turning point when religion is unable to satisfy men's needs—unable to cure despair by focusing attention on a future paradise.

“The achievement of religion,” says Prof. Laski, “was to persuade the poor to accept their poverty in part by the promise of salvation (in a life to come), and in part also by imposing upon the rich an obligation to mitigate by charity the miseries of the poor in this world. This was a necessary function in a period when man's control over Nature involved in the nature of things an inescapable poverty for the masses. By reconciling the poor to their poverty it helped orderly government and made possible the organization of society. But scientific progress has made the abolition of poverty possible, so that the idea of the heavenly city of religion gives way to the dream in which the reward of man's effort is not salvation in the life to come but happiness upon this earth itself.”

The disappearance of God, and with Him of heaven, leaves only the earth for man to make of it a heaven or hell. It means a recasting of religion, and a recasting of a fundamental sort. It means the shouldering by man of ultimate responsibilities which he had previously pushed off on to God. What are these responsibilities which man must now assume? There is the responsibility for carrying on in face of our own ignorance which, according to Buddhism, is the greatest hindrance to man's happiness. Next there is responsibility for the long-range control of destiny. Much that theistic religion left to divine guidance remains out of our hands. But our knowledge gives power of controlling our fate and that of the planet we inhabit, within wide limits. And then there is the most urgent responsibility for the immediate health and happiness of the species, for the enhancement of life on this earth, now and in the immediate future. Poverty, ill-health, social misery are phenomena to be understood and controlled in accordance with our desire, just as much as the phenomena of chemistry or electricity. These conceptions are embodied in what has been recently called “Evolutionary Humanism.”

At the dawn of the Renaissance, a Humanist was a scholarly Christian interested in reviving classical philosophy and literature.

Since then the title has undergone a sea change. A "humanist" nowadays is a person with faith in human progress, an awed respect for natural science and psychology, and a strong conviction that man can get along in this world without God.

Some humanists are feeling an urge to formalize their beliefs. Recently, in the quiet lecture halls of the University of Amsterdam, 250 delegates from Europe and the U.S. met for the first International Congress on Humanism and Ethical Culture. On the opening day of the convention, British Biologist Julian Huxley, former head of UNESCO, proposed launching a formal humanist religion. Present religions, he felt, were doing the job badly, and insisting too much on supernatural beliefs and absolute truth. Specifically, he suggested, the Roman Catholic stand on birth control and India's belief in sacred cows were good examples of religion's retarding influence.

To streamline the religious approach, Huxley outlined a new faith for the future: "Evolutionary humanism... firm yet flexible, simple yet rich and capable of development." He continued: "Man has the possibility of guiding change by means of conscious purpose in the light of rational experience.... Man's past includes a primarily religious phase. We now live in a technological and rationalist age. The next phase of history could and... should be a humanist phase."

The decay of God-religion and its sanctions makes it vital to find some other support for ethics, for unless virtue can be made the object of personal desire, the pursuit of which is as urgent and compelling as the scientist's pursuit of truth and the artist's pursuit of beauty, there is little incentive to be moral. "To preach morality is easy," wrote Schopenhauer, "to find a foundation for morality is hard," and a morality built on no foundation is as insecure as a house built on sand.

We know—as the result of long experience and observation—that certain forms of choice and willingness are disastrous, and that other forms are more salutary, if not actually necessary to any sort of welfare. This is the foundation of all morality; and, though it is not easy to find a scientific basis for ethics, resembling, let us say, the scientific basis of mechanics, we may at least assert that one general law of social action is scientifically established—which we may call the Law of Benevolence. And by this means we are able to establish a kind of touchstone, or test of effort and of direction, by which we can approve or condemn certain tendencies. Thus we may be said to have scientific grounds for

preferring co-operation and brotherliness (as methods of social behaviour) to self-centred struggle and aggressive competition ; peaceable activities to warlike ; altruistic to egoistic : and so on.

H. G. Wells gives his own scientific version of Social Religion in *The Conquest of Time*. His new religion is of the economic type, and he believes that our difficulties will be solved by a better organization of society, by a fairer distribution of this world's goods, by improvements in housing, medicine and education and with the help of all those scientific discoveries which have the effect of raising the general level of living.

But Wells sees clearly that some form of religion will be necessary to act as a cement for the new building he proposes to erect. He writes: " The teaching of history is strictly in accordance with the teaching of Buddha. There is no peace or happiness, no righteous leadership or kingship unless men lose themselves in something greater than themselves. The study of biological progress again records exactly the same process; the merging of the narrow globe of the individual experience in a wider being. To forget oneself is to escape from prison."

Wells formulates his faith in the following words : " The creed of the new religion which is destined to bind a regenerate world together is clear and simple. It demands the subordination of the self, of the aggressive personality, to the common creative task, which is the conquest and animation of the universe by life. The new religion soothes the innate fears and restrains the natural egotism of the young. It repudiates the idea of Sin and the idea of Personal Immortality ; which are both in their several ways begotten by Fear. It denies the existence of an anthropomorphic God (*Peccavi*), and it cannot afford to recognise any prevaricating use of the word 'God'. That word either implies a Personality or it implies nothing.

" The new religion maintains that the frame and whole object of life is the progressive conquest of hunger and thirst, of climate, of substance, of mechanical power, of bodily and mental pain, of space and distance, of time, of things that have seemed lost in the past and of things possible in the future. Continually the species will extend itself throughout a constantly ampler and more and more consciously living universe."

The future of religion demands that the religious impulse will become progressively more concerned with the organization of society. The process, of course, has already begun. We have

already commented on the religious elements in Russian Communism—its fanaticism, its insistence on orthodoxy, its ‘worship’ of Karl Marx and his apostle Lenin, its spirit of self-dedication, its crusading faith, the ruthless persecutions, the common enthusiasm, the puritan element, the mass-emotions. These are the first gropings of the human mind after a social embodiment of the religious impulse. They are as crude, and in some respects as repulsive, as its first gropings millennia previously after theism. The blood-thirsty gods of those earlier times, the human sacrifice, the loss of self-criticism in the flood of emotional certitude, the sinister power of a privileged hierarchy, the justification of self, and the vilification of critics and the violence towards opponents—these and other primitive phenomena of early God-religion have their counterpart in today’s dawn of Social Religion. To achieve some real understanding and control of the forces and processes operating in human societies is the next great task. The religious impulse, itself one of the social forces to be more fully comprehended and controlled, will increasingly find its outlet in the promotion of the ideals of the Socialized State.

Buddhism demands for the attainment of happiness a new mentality detaching men from possessions, controlling the passions, losing themselves in something greater than themselves, and directing thought towards moral and intellectual perfection. As a model of this ideal society, the Buddha set up His Sangha, consisting of a minority within the State to live voluntarily a selfless life, non-attached to possessions or social position, and communally sharing whatever necessities of life they received; for more than this He could not do since He had not, nor desired, absolute power within the State. The problem of applying this Socialist way of life, to a wider community the Buddha left to His followers; and today, in Marxian Communist countries, the experiment is being tried to make their entire populations live this kind of life under State compulsion and direction.

The Marxist theory of proletarian dictatorship as the prelude to Communism leads to what Trotsky called the militarisation of labour and State compulsion. Socialism, he said, will remain an empty sound without militarisation and State compulsion of labour. “There is no way to socialise except by the authoritative regulation of economic forces and resources . . . and the centralised distribution of labour in harmony with the general State plan.” It is here that the Marxist system will shipwreck. No means will ever be found to induce human beings to surrender themselves to a dictated

felicity. Every type of compulsion is hateful, always has been, and always will be hateful, so long as men are men—they would prefer a human chaos to an inhuman order.

According to Marxist theory the State is a supreme, almighty organ, and to this supreme, almighty organ individual liberty must be sacrificed. This is certainly true during the period of temporary dictatorship. In this sense the Marxist system is totalitarian and is a one-party system which does not permit individual liberty, freedom of conviction, of press, and of assembly, as we know it from the democratic system.

Marxism accepts the factor of struggle, of the battle for life, as one of the fundamental principles of human evolution; it is the struggle of classes and not the struggle between individuals or between nations. This struggle in society has as its aim, according to the principles of Marxian Communism, the destruction of all classes and the establishment of the classless society, the completely equalitarian and non-attached community. This establishment of the community without differences of classes and non-attached to possessions, or fame, or power, or social position, can be realised only through a social revolution. The Marxist revolution ends with the establishment of a dictatorship; and this dictatorship, according to Marxist theory, is only temporary. The dictatorship of the proletariat is established for a certain period only, until the moment at which the new social machinery of a completely equalitarian and non-attached community without classes is definitely established. Afterwards, in the opinion of militant Communists, the equalitarian non-attached society will attain peace and happiness—in other words, the highest Buddhist ideal, an all-encompassing Arahāt-world, is expected to come into being.

The dynamic force of the doctrine of Marx was derived from hatred. Hatred was a natural reaction, but what Marx did was to erect hatred into a cosmic principle and the source of all progress. The force that brings about change in social affairs is the conflict of classes. After the proletarian revolution there will be only one class, and therefore change will cease; mankind will merely go on living happily ever after, as at the end of a fairy tale. This curiously primitive myth appealed to the less fortunate sections of mankind, much as Christianity had appealed to slaves in the Roman Empire. It brought the hope of a great reversal, in which the oppressed would come to enjoy happiness, power and—sweetest of all—revenge.

Buddhism does not accept the Marxist conception of the class struggle, the Marxist theory of revolution and temporary dictatorship based on class divergencies, nor the theory of the domination of one class by another—neither the working class by the bourgeoisie nor the bourgeoisie by the working class. But, if there is no doubt that the divergencies between individuals and classes practically do exist, there is again only the Buddhist method which must be used for harmonisation between the classes and the progressive disappearance of inequalities. That means the evolutionary method—the method of democracy: discussion, co-operation, agreement. It means also in a certain sense a struggle, but between human beings we must try always to solve these problems by the human, non-violent, non-sanguinary means and methods. That is Buddhism. We underline this point of view, knowing full well that there are periods of human evolution when revolution or war becomes inevitable and justified.

Democracy has not been unknown to India. In fact India and Greece simultaneously marched along the same road of political experience: and the Buddha Himself was a staunch democrat. The Buddhist assemblies were fully democratic and had elaborate rules of procedure, election and debate. Scholars, among them British historians, have discovered in these assemblies of two thousand five hundred years ago rudiments of the modern parliamentary system of government. An elected assembly, an embryo Speaker, a chief whip, the moving of a resolution, use of ballot voting by *salākās*, strict adherence to the rules of a meeting and so forth are amongst the institutions that existed then. The procedure in these assemblies reflected—howsoever imperfectly—the elaborate method of business in democratic legislative bodies of today. The Buddhist records contain an interesting conversation between the Master and His disciple, the venerable Ananda, “Have you heard, Ananda, that the Vijjians foregather often and frequent the public meetings of their clan?” asked the Master. “Lord, so I have heard” replied Ananda. “So long, Ananda,” said the Buddha, “as the Vijjians foregather thus often and frequent the public meetings of their clan, so long may they be expected not to decline but to prosper.”

Marxism is a leaf taken from the book of Buddhism— a leaf torn out and misread. Democracy is another leaf from the book of Buddhism, which has also been torn out and, while perhaps not misread, has certainly been half emptied of meaning by being

divorced from its Buddhist context and thus has been made subservient to reactionary forces. The democracies today are obviously living on spiritual capital ; we mean clinging to the formal observances of Buddhism without possessing its inner dynamic.

It is inevitable that Christianity should have opposed the way of life experimented by atheistic Communism. It has been carrying on the same war against atheistic Buddhism. If Communism cannot be regarded by theistic religion as the end of the whole life process, it certainly takes a vitally necessary step forward in religious development. Communism has overcome the disintegration of modern society by pressing forward to a higher and more complete union of the separated parts. Communism has found a form of integration compatible with the necessities of a technical civilization. Communism has served religion by challenging the irreligious dualism which separated life into two parts, religious and secular, thus perverting the ultimate aim of true religion.

As religious organisations grow and become more powerful, their effect may be increasingly to divert the energies of men from the realm of the secular to that of the sacred. A progressive intensification of organised religious activity is then accompanied by a progressive deterioration of quality in the expressiveness of secular society. The life of religion is divorced from the life of the world, and the gulf between the sacred and the profane is widened by every new effort that religion makes to close it, because the effort is always made in a manner which, by emphasising the importance of the religious institution, intensifies its self-consciousness.

The purpose of religion is to inspire men with a motive for living that derives its worth from its power to transmute the secular activity of the world into sacredness. As soon, therefore, as the life of religion becomes autonomous, separate from the life of the world, expressive in a realm or organization of its own, it becomes impotent. Religion is then like a boiler, continually being fired to create a head of steam it does not know how to use, while society is like a machine without the energy that could make its piston move.

The early Sangha, as established by the Buddha, comprised real Communists whose precept and practice have virtually disappeared from the earth. They were a classless community every member of which was equal (*sama samaja*) and equally free. They individually owned no property, all possessions being held by the community. This ideal of communal ownership of property is emphasized in the *Mahaparinibbana Sutta* where it is said: "So long as the

Brethren shall divide without partiality and share in common with the upright and the holy, all such things as they receive in accordance with the just provisions of the Order, down even to the merest contents of a begging bowl, so long may the Brethren be expected, not to decline but to prosper." Here, as far as it was humanly possible, was realized the true Communist ideal of a classless, equalitarian and non-attached society.

Communism, in its orthodox theoretical form, is thus not at all inconsistent with the Communism of the original Sangha. And, although in practice, in Russia and elsewhere, modern Communism exhibits many and marked divergences from the orthodox theory, it still remains true that the ideal Buddhist way of life and a genuine Communism can be thoroughly consistent with each other. There are many Buddhists who are convinced that there is much more in common between Buddhism and Communism than between Buddhism and capitalism. The Buddhists, therefore, should avoid an indiscriminate condemnation of Communism, which would compel many, especially of the younger generation, to feel that they must choose between Buddhism and Communism.

But while it is possible to be a Buddhist and a Communist, it is not possible to be a Christian and a Marxian Communist without disloyalty either to Christ or to Marx, for Marxian Communism is far more than a political or economic theory; it has a doctrine behind it which leaves no room for Christianity or for any other form of theism. It is the most dangerous antagonist to Christianity.

It is probable that a universalist humanism, as the Buddha's doctrine is, will soon become a strong rival to the old theistic systems. It is also probable that with the growth of intolerance, in countries which follow theistic religions and capitalist systems, the pioneers of such a humanism will be those most exposed to religious and political persecution, but also those who will be doing most for their form of Socialised Religion and for religious progress in general. But these crusaders for a new day on earth need not be disheartened; their suffering, privations and labour will bring their reward so long as they are united in the service of their common faith and go forward shoulder to shoulder as a united army, fighting evil, establishing righteousness and as brothers in service. It is imperative that Buddhism should make no alliance with reactionary forces either religious or political. Buddhism has no quarrel with Communism, which, as the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* says, is "a spiritual

movement based on the deepest moral motives." But the ideal of Buddhism as well as that of Communism can be attained only when man's nature is raised to a higher level.

For the attainment of this ideal we will have to wait in faith till the fulfilment of Lenin's hope for the emergence of the better man; for the universal prevalence of a higher order of morality than that now to be found among us; when in consequence the worker will no longer (the words are Lenin's) "calculate with the shrewdness of a Shylock whether he has worked half-an-hour more than another, whether he is not getting less pay than another" when "the necessity of observing the simple fundamental rules of human intercourse will become a habit." Admittedly this is a long term policy and a long term hope and postulates, in the words of Lenin, "a person unlike the present man-in-the-street."

In the near future the religious impulse will find its main outlet in relation to the internal environment of the human species—social, economic, and psychological—for it is the forces of this internal environment that are now causing distress and bewilderment and are being felt as Destiny to be propitiated or otherwise manipulated. Meanwhile science will find its main scope for new endeavour in this same field, since it is here that our ignorance and our lack of control are most glaring.

In the Socialised State the relation between religion and science will gradually cease to be one of conflict and will become one of co-operation. Science will be called on to advise what expressions of the religious impulse are intellectually permissible and socially desirable, if that impulse is to be properly integrated with other human activities and harnessed to take its share in pulling the chariot of man's destiny along the path of progress.

Few things are more purifying to our conception of values than to contemplate the gradual rise of man from his obscure and difficult beginnings to his present eminence. He learned the use of fire, of bows and arrows, of language, of domestic animals and, at last, of agriculture. He learned to co-operate in communities, to build great pyramids and stupas, to explore the world in all directions and, at last, to cope with disease and poverty. He studied the stars, he invented geometry, and he learned to substitute machines for muscles in necessary labour. Some of the most important of these advances are very recent and are as yet confined to a very few nations.

In former days most children died in infancy, mortality in adult life was very high, and in every country the great majority of the

population endured abject poverty. Now certain nations have succeeded in preserving the lives of the overwhelming majority of infants, in lowering enormously the adult death rate and in nearly eliminating abject poverty. Other nations, where disease and abject poverty are still the rule, could achieve the same level of well-being by adopting the same methods. There is, therefore, a new hope for mankind.

The hope cannot be realized unless the causes of present evils are understood. But it is the hope that needs to be emphasized. The Buddha has said man is master of his destiny; what he suffers he suffers because he is stupid or wicked, not because of any external agency; his future lies in his own hands and it is his business to secure that future for happiness, peace and prosperity.

Man, in the long ages since he descended from the trees, has passed arduously and perilously through a vast desert, surrounded by the whitening bones of those who have perished by the way, maddened by hunger or thirst, by fear of wild beasts, by dread of enemies, by fear of gods, devils and spooks.

Formerly "God", "gods", "Providence," "Fate," "Karma," were symbols of man's dependence on the caprices of Nature, the whims of rulers, the blind market whose mysterious shifts could spell such catastrophe. People felt themselves to be the sport of forces over which they had little or no control. Now they know they make their own Fate or Karma. With the growth of political ideologies inimical to the traditional faith in God, religion, which had hitherto used man's ignorance and fears, superstitions and intolerance, greed and cravings as handmaids to further its ends, has lost its hold on the control of human destiny.

At last man has emerged from the desert into a smiling land where he can truly say: "I am the master of my destiny"; but in the long night he has forgotten how to smile. We cannot believe in the brightness of the morning. We think it trivial and deceptive; we cling to old myths that allow us to go on living with fear and hate—above all, hate of ourselves, victims of Karma, miserable sinners.

This is folly. Man now needs for his salvation only one thing: to open his heart to joy and leave fear to gibber through the glimmering darkness of a forgotten past. He must lift up his eyes and say: "No, I am not a miserable sinner, nor am I a victim of Karma: I am a being who, by a long and arduous road, have discovered how to make intelligence master natural obstacles, how to live in freedom and joy, at peace with myself, and, therefore, with all mankind."

Chapter VIII

TOWARDS A BETTER WORLD

"The philosophers hitherto have only interpreted the world in various ways: the thing is, however, to change it."

—KARL MARX

(1) *The Roads to the Goal (Political)*

AT all times in the history of civilization, the conditions of life for the majority of men have been harsh, insecure or otherwise unsatisfactory, and at all times men have, therefore, found compensation for the immediate present by dreaming of a better world that has existed or may or might exist at some other time or place. The ancient Greeks dreamed of a Golden Age of the remote past, at the beginning of created things, when, as Hesiod says, "men lived like gods, free from toil and grief." The Christians dream of a Golden Age with the Second Advent, when Christ would come again and establish the Church Triumphant, in which peace and justice would reign. Similarly, the Buddhists look forward to a Golden Age in the remote future with the coming of Maitreya Buddha, when all men will be moral and decent, prosperous and joyous. There is also the prophetic vision of Tolstoy, in which he envisages a time "when the world will have no use for armies, hypocritical religions, degenerate art and decadent political systems" (see Appendix Three).

In human affairs nothing is predetermined until after it has occurred. For this reason it is less futile to be concerned with the Golden Age of the future than with the Golden Age of the past. We cannot recover the past, but we can, within the limits set by Nature and history and our own intelligence and resolution, make the future. We do make the future in any case; and since we help to make the future, it is better to help make it, not by letting things ride, but by having some idea of where things ought to go and doing whatever is possible to make them go in that direction.

Fortunately, there are at all times a good number of people—intelligent, humane, liberal-minded people—who are more or less actively, more or less passionately, concerned with the better world of tomorrow. They comprise the various brands of militant liberals, progressives, radicals, as distinguished from the various brands of fatalists, conservatives and reactionaries. They are

idealists whose chief weakness is that, living too much in the ideal world of tomorrow, they are prone to forget or ignore how inert and toughly resistant the world of today really is ; so that, as other men look back to a Golden Age that never existed, they too often look forward to a Golden Age that cannot in fact be created.

No one, of course, is ever exclusively concerned with either the past or the future. Everyone is always concerned with both at the same time, but for the most part only in respect of their private affairs. So far as public affairs are concerned, most of us, in humdrum times of peace and plenty, when everything is going on much as usual, are fairly content with the world as it is. But in times of great disturbance, in times of famine and distress, when the dispossessed, the starving and the unemployed are on the march and our private lives and interests are threatened, we are easily persuaded that something is radically wrong with the world and that something, even if we don't quite know what, should be done about it. Then the latent idealism that is in all of us comes to the surface : and, generally speaking, the more un-ideal the world becomes, the more disposed we are to believe that an ideal world can be created.

INDIVISIBILITY OF POLITICS AND ETHICS

With regard to the ideal world, the goal of human effort, there has existed a very general agreement. The great regenerators of human life have spoken with one voice. In the Golden Age to which they look forward there will be liberty, peace, justice and brotherly love. Although with regard to the goal there has been a very general agreement ; not so with regard to the roads which lead to that goal.

Aldous Huxley, in *Ends and Means*, says : "There are some who believe—and it is a very popular belief at the present time—that the royal road to a better world is the road of economic reform. For some, the short cut to Utopia is military conquest and the hegemony of one particular nation: for others, it is armed revolution and the dictatorship of a particular class. All these think mainly in terms of social machinery and large-scale organization. There are others, however, who approach the problem from the opposite end, and believe that desirable social changes can be brought about most effectively by changing the individuals who compose society. Of the people who think in this way, some pin their faith to education, some to psycho-analysis, some to applied behaviourism.

There are others, on the contrary, who believe that no desirable 'change of heart' can be brought about without supernatural aid. There must be, they say, a return to religion. (Unhappily, they cannot agree on the religion to which the return should be made)."

Here we come upon the antinomy which is always recurring in discussions on social progress. On the one side, "No progress is possible without a moral improvement in the individual"; and so it is often inferred that no external or material change is of any use. On the other side, "Change the circumstances which mould men's characters, and the characters will change"; and so it is often inferred that external or material changes are the sole things needed.

Each premise is true, but not the whole truth; and, therefore, both inferences are wrong. Human beings are dependent on circumstances, but they have also natures of their own, natures inherited from their ancestors (*Uruma*) and their *Karma* (actions), and modified by reflection, environment and sentiment: so that for social progress there must be harmony between character and circumstances. Man is a compound of animal propensities, intellectual faculties and moral qualities. His character is the result of his formation, and of the circumstances within which he exists.

It seems incredible, but Karl Marx, with all his talk about making Socialism "scientific," took a step *backwards* from this elementary notion. He dropped out the factor of man's hereditary nature altogether. He dropped out man altogether, so far as he might present an obstacle to social change. "The individual," he said, "has no real existence outside the milieu in which he lives." By which he meant: Change the milieu, change the social relations, and man will change as much as you like. That is all Marx ever said on this primary question. And Lenin said nothing.

Man is the most plastic and adaptable of animals. He truly can be changed by his environment, and even by himself, to a unique degree, and that makes extreme ideas of progress reasonable. On the other hand, he inherits a set of emotional impulses or instincts which, although they can be trained in various ways in the individual, cannot be eradicated from the race. And no matter how much they may be repressed or redirected by training, they reappear in the original form—as sure as a hedgehog puts out spikes—in every baby that is born.

One of these instincts is an aggressive or pugnacious tendency. Whenever the human animal is frustrated in any of his impulses, he is likely to get an impulse to lambaste somebody. And as

all of us in the nature of things are in large part frustrated all the time, there is always plenty of pugnacity lying around. Marx taught his followers to harness for their ends this "brute force." He gave them a chance to fight. They were going to arrive at the goal by way of a sort of grand historic universal knock-down-and-drag-out, known as the Revolutionary Class Struggle.

It is true that man is fiercely inclined to satisfy his appetites. Men instinctively gang up under a leader and fight. And in that fighting union all those "moral qualities," reasonableness and justice, candour and magnanimity, tend to give way before the deeper-lying instincts inherited from the jungle. Even calculating self-interest tends to give way. You cannot count on anything but cohesion and intolerance. But he is a slave who yields to these passions. He becomes free only when his mind, and not an animal instinct, dominates his course. To be master of his fate one must first be master of his passions.

Men have in their hereditary nature a good-sized dose of belligerence, and they have a disposition both to submit to others and to "boss" them that is not an acquired taste. Their appreciation of independence and equality, as well as their co-operativeness, is qualified by very strong drives of a contrary kind. Progress must, therefore, consist in elevating the level and humanizing the terms on which the vital contests are fought. This takes perhaps a little of the flame out of the heart of the revolutionist, but it will keep a light shining in his head.

Marx, who made Communism a classic doctrine in the history of economic theory, was an idealist insufficiently equipped with knowledge either of natural or human history: he saw man only as part of an economic process, and his path to progress was the path of conflict: only through hatred, violence and revolution could mankind realize itself. The Buddha saw man as a conscious part of Nature, and his path to happiness was a moral and intellectual one: only by raising his ethos to a higher level could man achieve progress culminating in perfection.

Marx taught that a man is what environment makes him and no more; the Buddha taught that a man is what he makes himself. Change the structure of society, said Marx, and you change the man. Change yourself, said the Buddha, and you will help to change the structure of society.

The moral of these comments should be obvious. The *thesis* of traditional Buddhism and the *antithesis* of Marxian Communism are incomplete. They contain both merits and defects. The

Buddhist tends to regard the perfecting of the individual as the essential task of religion, and thus to ignore the need for constructing a better order of society: the Communist tends to assume that a change of system is sufficient and that the conversion of the individual is irrelevant.

The Buddhist hides from the realities behind a barrier of well-meaning phrases, and concentrates his attention so largely on the need for Love and Kindness that he ignores the inevitability of conflict with the reactionary elements: the Communist is concerned so exclusively with the struggle that he tends to become ruthless and intolerant in his outlook.

The Buddhist is so entangled in the claims of tradition that he is a stranger in the world of current politics: the revolutionary is so impatient towards traditional claims that he ignores the values contained in the past order, and is accordingly crude in his criticisms of religion and apt to disregard the cultural assets of religion.

The Buddhist believes that truth can be discovered in the realm of pure theory, delighting therefore in speculative thought and ready to make irrelevancies the cardinal issues of his religion: the Communist regards action as the sole essential, thus excluding from consideration any question of the existence of absolute principles, and so rendering his case opportunist.

These examples, though roughly stated, may help to indicate that we have reached a stage when a *synthesis* is necessary. The first step towards such a synthesis must be the frank realization that politics cannot be divorced from ethics. This divorce has been the fatal error of the philosophers who have taught the universal ethics. Yet some great thinkers have seen this truth. Long ago Plato embodied in *The Republic* his principal ethical teaching in which he sketched the political organization of his ideal State, recognizing no separation between the principles of ethics and of politics. And in a later age, another great thinker, Edmund Burke, explicitly announced the same truth, declaring that "the principles of true politics are but those of morals enlarged."

SURRENDER OF INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS

What is it that we are aiming at in our dreams of a better future? Most people would agree that it is the greatest happiness of all the people.

There exist many definitions of happiness; and different people hold different opinions on what it consists of. But if the thesis

we have now developed is well founded, we shall all agree that happiness cannot be found without self-realization. Only in giving the fullest expression to our particular gifts and strivings, can we attain happiness. But in a world full of opposing interests and frictions, self-realization cannot be achieved without harmony with the surrounding world.

The individual problem, therefore, becomes the world problem; the individual, with his inner conflicts, with his psychological struggles, with his frustrations, with his anxieties, pursuits, motives, projects these into the world, and in this way the problem of the individual becomes the world problem. The world is not apart from you, the world *is* you—not mystically, but actually; biologically and psychologically in relationship, the world is you. To seek individual perfection, leads to isolation, to segregation; and nothing can exist in isolation.

Therefore, there must be harmony between the individual and the community in which he exists. This means that the individual has to surrender certain rights, and to suppress certain desires, all of which in themselves are legitimate, but which are inconsistent with the attainment of that harmony with his fellow-man which is postulated as a necessity for the good life. To whom, or to what, must he surrender these rights? It must be to the State (whatever its precise form) which represents and executes the will of the whole community.

The function of every Government is to provide a framework upon which the life of the community can be built. And in the context "provide" means more than the initial construction: the Government must maintain it in good order, must modify, extend, alter, and adapt it to changing times and circumstances. We shall attempt to provide a short list of abstract principles of Government, and to apply each of them so as to be in a position to adopt a logical attitude towards some current controversies.

The State has to provide :—Internal security : protection against external aggression; education of the children; justice between man and man and social justice, including equitable distribution of all necessities for the good life; cohesion and homogeneity within the community. It will be easily perceived that these duties or functions include every facet of man's life and activity on earth. It will also be perceived that the actions of Governments today are more widespread, and penetrate far more deeply into the individual lives of the citizens than in bygone times. The more highly

developed the community, the more will this Governmental ubiquitous intervention be manifested.

FREEDOM AND THE STATE ANTITHETIC

There can be no absolute freedom where there is a State: the two are impossible bed-fellows. Thus Lenin's maxim, "While the State exists there is no freedom: When there is freedom there will no State," is no more than the repeated overstatement of a truism, and it is a mirage, inasmuch as it appears to display to our vision the prospect of a future freedom when there is no longer a State: but this prospect is totally illusory.

The exercise by any one person of a right to live one's own life in one's own way of necessity entails serious interference with some other individual's freedom. For this reason true freedom is the prerogative of the few, and even at that is only possible where the interests or activities of these few do not clash with the interests or activities of their competitors. In any organized State or in any group, freedom is restricted to one individual at one time: *ergo*, in any other or general sense, it does not exist, it cannot exist. For freedom, where more than one individual is concerned, and where the group is not socially and economically isolated, constitutes its own negation.

The State, whatever form it takes, must restrict, along certain definite channels, individual liberty. This much must be admitted; the alternative is anarchy. The acceptance of the principle that the State, if it is to function at all, must restrict the liberty of the individual, implies that the success of any system of government will be in direct proportion to the extent to which it *can* interfere with individual freedom; and in inverse proportion to the extent to which in fact it *does* so interfere.

The only conception of freedom practicable in the organized State is that the individual should be allowed to order his own life and to express himself as he wishes so long as his activities do not restrict the liberty, within the same circumscribed orbit, of others with whom he comes into contact.

And Rousseau's axiom that all men are "born free" is also a fundamental error. There are, in fact, two perpetual and inescapable slaveries. Besides the slavery to the State just mentioned, there is slavery to necessity, enforced by Nature on pain of hunger, thirst, nakedness, rooflessness, accident, violence, wild beasts, plague, pestilence and famine, battle, murder and sudden death.

We must hunt and fight, sow and reap, weave and build, nurse and rear, dust and sweep and wash, or we perish off the face of the earth.

We can never escape this natural burden; but we can ease it by the use of tools and weapons, co-operation and division of labour, weather forecasting, policing, mechanizing, technical education and the like. Without them labour would take up the whole time and energy of every man and woman from dawn to dusk. With them more can be done in an hour or less. A Nottingham lace machine can turn out in a day many thousand times as much lace as a Kotte woman can knit. In agriculture, harvestors and tractors can plough and dig, and reap and trash, faster than a whole village of farmers.

In this middle period of the twentieth century no man is born free or can become free. Under the Soviet regime of Russia every individual is bound, from birth to death, on the wheel of the sovereign and supreme State. The goal of those who wish to change society for the better is freedom, justice and peaceful co-operation between non-attached, yet active and responsible individuals. And there is no reason to suppose that such a goal can be reached through police espionage, military slavery, the centralization of power, the creation of an elaborate political hierarchy, the suppression of free discussion and the imposition of an authoritarian system of education.

Even in the U. S. A., long held to be the home of democracy, the country where the words "and equal" were added to Rousseau's proclamation of free birth, we are witnessing heresy-hunting in the fields of politics, education, and culture: the persecution of opinions: detestable outbursts of race-hatred; obstinate and stupid narrowness in religious belief, and a thousand other manifestations of a herd-mentality which is poisonous to the original noble Declaration uttered by the founders of that nation.

The Americans have disposed of the Red Indians while arguing about Rights and Liberty. The British have subdued and oppressed a large number of people while invoking the Bible and the Gospel. And today, Malan, in South Africa, seeks to thrust entire races of men into permanent and degrading inferiority because of the colour of their skin. This is as bad as anything ever dreamt of in Hitler's crazy mind, and as bad as anything that has happened east of the Iron Curtain. We loathe the brutality and stupidity of so much that is done in the name of Communism, but at least the Communists are striving for a system of justice between man and man,

however much their methods soil their ideal. Is there any more despicable coalition of hypocrisy on earth than what goes by the name of 'equality of mankind'?

JUSTICE THE ESSENCE OF THE STATE

Now a society needs government and needs it for two reasons. First, man demands justice, and society must, therefore, develop some organisation which will ensure justice ; " man," as Aristotle put it, is a " State-needing animal " because " man needs justice and justice needs the State." Secondly, he needs law. The need for law arises primarily in those spheres in respect of which, while it matters very little what people do, it matters very much that they should all do the same thing. Whether the rule of the road requires us to keep to the left or to the right is a matter of indifference ; but it is essential that whichever side is in fact prescribed should be universally observed.

It follows that there must be in a society a body which is responsible for making and enforcing laws which ensure that everybody shall do the same thing in spheres in which uniformity of behaviour is essential. Justice and law may be taken as exemplifying the needs and purposes which all men have in common. Society requires, therefore, an organisation which shall express the needs and further the purposes which all men have in common.

Law is, in fact, the machinery : justice is the principle, the motive power, the supreme source. It is only through the operation of the legal machine that the energetic principle, justice, impinges on the daily life of the citizen. Thus the machine is, and must be, always at work : but it must not be a machine whose construction, and mode of operation, is fixed for all time. It must act with speed, with precision, with uniformity and regularity ; but above all, it must act with simplicity and clarity, so that its every operation can be easily " understood of the people." It is a truism, that law which is static is an intolerable tyranny, which defeats the very object of justice, its own creator. New and changing human needs and aspirations call for changes and improvements in the law.

It is unfortunately the case, that the legal system of Ceylon today suffers from both the defects which we have indicated. It is antiquated and it is chaotic. We are subject to a hotch-potch of English, Roman Dutch, Kandyan, Muslim and Tamil (Thesawalamai) law, and our Codes are borrowed, on the paste and scissors method, from India. We need not only codification, and clarification of our legal system, but many amendments to bring it into

line with modern conditions, and ethical and moral conceptions. The only possible cure for this state of affairs is to put the whole present system into the melting pot, and make an entirely new Code, which will satisfy the complex of modern needs and aspirations.

Our present laws reward the acquisitive impulse and exploitation of man by man. Can we, then, blame the acquisitive individual who makes use of the rules as he finds them? If a mother rewarded her children for lying and stealing, with candy and fine toys, and trips to the circus, we could hardly blame the children if they turned out to be selfish little thieves. So we can hardly blame the acquisitive individual today. The point is that present law fails to curb the acquisitive instinct, and that mankind is thereby the loser.

FOOD AND THE PRESSURE OF POPULATION

None but a philosopher will cavil if we say the object of Government is to achieve the greatest happiness of all the people—not just of the greatest number. In the modern world Buddhism should have the greatest appeal among religions, because it declares that the happiness or misery of the world depends on man alone and not on some power outside the universe. The Buddha taught that men should seek the highest happiness in this very life and not wait for it till after death. And of what is happiness compounded? A varied and free life on a full stomach. The Buddha himself realised this when He refused to preach to a starving man till he had been given a meal. Just as few can appreciate a sermon on an empty stomach, so also in that circumstance a varied and free life loses its charms. The first aim of any political party should be, and indeed it is, to achieve a high material standard for the maximum number of people—freedom from want.

We have tried to put the object in its simplest terms, but, like all simplifications, it may be open to misunderstanding. At first sight, indeed, after all the talk about spiritual values, our definition might appear to be irredeemably materialistic. Those who are troubled by the tendencies of the age, the pursuit of pleasure, the retreat from religion, the loss of ability to be shocked, may revolt at talk of full stomachs and increasing material standards. If so, they do us an injustice. In man morality and materialism are inextricably mixed, and an attempt to put special emphasis on one of those two constituents is to depart from reality.

That the emphasis among too many people is upon materialism is certainly true. Too many people assume progress to be identical with an increase in income ; whereas reflection would tell them that it is more than anything the cultivation and enlargement of the mind. Happiness may be encouraged by comfort but does not flow from it. But to assert that comfort is, therefore, of no importance is to strain the argument too far. Not many moralists write from hovels, and it is idle to pretend that poverty and insecurity do not incline to debase. Accordingly, in the recognition that comfort is for most people a spur to a varied and free life, its achievement is a major political problem.

Hand in hand with a high national standard must go security, that the standard shall not suddenly collapse through circumstances outside its owner's control. To be economically healthy and politically stable, a country must afford its people a chance to make a decent living. There is something wrong somewhere in a State in which individuals willing and able to work find it impossible to secure a living wage.

Today (1952), the estimated number of able-bodied workers unemployed in Ceylon is 100,000. With a population of over 7½ millions, the country only produces one-third of its requirements of the staple food. Incidentally, this is the same proportion as was the case 30 years ago when the population was about 4½ millions. The statisticians' forecast,—and there is no reason to doubt its accuracy,—is that the population in 1962 will be 10 million, and in 1972, 12½ millions. No substantial new field of employment is visible: nor can we expect any considerable expansion of employment in the major agricultural industries, *viz.* tea, rubber and coconuts. The reason for this is quite simple and clear: there is no market inducement for such expansion. Ceylon is pre-eminently agricultural: the possibility of developing heavy industries involving masses of man-power is very problematical: and it is probably conservative to estimate the 1962 and 1972 figures of the unemployed at ¾ million and 1½ million respectively.*

* The employment opportunities available in Ceylon according to present statistics are not increasing sufficiently to keep pace with the increase in population. This conclusion is drawn from a study of the problem of the increase in population and its implications on the employment position in the country made recently by the Labour Department. Mr. S. Sasaratnam the Labour Statistical Officer reports: The analysis of population figures shows that it has risen from approximately 4,500,000 in 1921 to over 6,500,000 in 1946. This is compared with the increase in the economically active or "gainfully occupied population" which has risen from 2,220,712 in 1921 to 2,611,524 in 1946—an increase of only 390,812 as against an increase of population of a little over 2,000,000.

A very large scale project, 'Gal Oya', has just been completed as far as the construction works are concerned. This construction has taken over two years, has cost an enormous capital sum of money, and will cover, in its final execution, a substantial acreage of land which was cultivable but hitherto uncultivated. Yet an eminent authority of the I.L.O. has just pronounced that it will provide employment only sufficient to cope with one year's increase of the country's population. But it is impossible either from the financial or the physical point of view, to carry out a project of these dimensions every year.

In brief, population, and therefore the number of potential workers, is increasing far faster than the work and the food available for them, and no relief from this double pressure is at present visible. Other countries have been confronted with a similar problem: some, perhaps, in a less intense, some in a more intense form. It has usually been solved by the voluntary practice of Birth Control. It appears to us that it is in this direction that the solution of Ceylon's problem must be sought. But this conclusion only leads us to a further problem. It is a recognised fact that voluntary Birth Control is only practised by communities of people who enjoy a fairly high standard of life. These people consciously practise Birth Control with the deliberate purpose of preserving that standard. We have, therefore, two requisites: First, the high national standard of life; second, the mature social intelligence of the people by means of which they are aware of their danger and of the means of avoiding it.*

It is generally the very poor who multiply without regard to consequences, and if the condition of the existing generation could be greatly improved, their successors would grow up with an increased standard of requirements, and would not have large families

* The estimated population at mid-1952 was 7,870,000. If the current rate of increase is maintained, population will be just under 10,000,000 in 1962 and 12,700,000 in 1972. . . . The island-wide average density of population has arisen from 98 per square mile in 1871 to 298 today. . . . If the present rate of increase is not checked it will be only a few years before the population problem will be felt very keenly and very obviously. The new land available for cultivation, although considerable, is limited; and the development of new resources and means of employment through industrialisation is bound to be slow. The economic developments which are in sight can take care of the natural increase of population for only a very few years, after which continuation of that increase can only be at the expense of the health and the standard of living of the people. Unless serious attention is paid at once to the population problem, the next generation will be living under worse, not better conditions and will be worse, not better fed than the present—Extract from the Report on the Economic Development of Ceylon by the International Bank Mission.

until they could keep them in as much comfort as they had experienced in their own childhood. A sudden and very great improvement in the condition of the poor, has always through its effect on their habits of life, a chance of becoming permanent. What happened at the time of the French Revolution is an example. During the generation which the Revolution raised from the extreme of hopeless wretchedness to sudden abundance, a great increase of population took place. But a generation has grown up, which, having been born in improved circumstances, has not learnt to be miserable; and upon them the spirit of thrift operates most conspicuously, in keeping the increase of population within the increase of national wealth.

The majority of the population being suddenly raised from misery to independence and comparative comfort, the immediate effect was that population, notwithstanding the destructive wars of the period, started forward with unexampled rapidity, partly because improved circumstances enabled many children to be reared who would otherwise have died, and partly from increase of births. The succeeding generation, however, grew up with habits entirely altered; and the annual number of births is now nearly stationary, and the increase of population extremely slow.

In Ceylon today we have not yet reached the requisite material standard, and it is highly doubtful whether any appreciable proportion of the people have acquired the requisite social sense: they will inevitably continue to breed with the irresponsibility of the codfish. Unless we take steps and begin to swing into them soon, we may as well give up all hope of continuing civilized life. Like the Gaderene swine, we shall rush down a war-torn slope to a barbarian existence in the blackened rubble. We must take appropriate measures as soon as possible ere it is too late, adopt population policies formulated in other countries, and teach the citizen to plan his family according to his means.

BIRTH CONTROL

But, whenever the phrase "Birth Control" is mentioned here, the local Christian hierarchy goes up in the air. At once it sees another blow at 'God-made' society, and proclaims that it is part of a larger, pernicious programme to overthrow the 'pre-ordained' social structure.

In its practical workings, there is nothing in the Christian Church code of morals to protect the woman, either from unwilling submission to the wishes of her husband, from undesired pregnancy,

nor from any other of the outrages that are only too familiar to many married women. Nothing is said about the crime of bringing an unwanted child into the world, where often it cannot be adequately cared for, and is, therefore, condemned to a life of misery. The Church's one point of insistence is upon its own right to legalise marriage and to compel the woman to submit to whatever such marriage may bring.

Closely associated with, and underlying the principle of submission, has been the doctrine that the sex life is in itself unclean. It follows, therefore, that all knowledge of sex physiology or sex functions is also unclean and taboo. Upon this teaching has been found woman's subjection by the Church and, largely through the influence of the Church, her subjection by the State to the needs of the man.

This is emphatically stated in the Third Chapter of the First Epistle of Peter and the Fifth Chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians. In the Douay version of the latter, we find this :

"22—Let women be subject to their husbands as to the Lord.

"23—Because the husband is the head of the wife; as Christ is the head of the Church.

"24—Therefore, as the Church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their husbands in all things."

These doctrines, together with the denial to men of Social Justice and equality, formed the basis of morality as fixed by the Catholic Church.

When it was proposed a few years back to permit women to mount the pulpit, a manifesto was issued by London churchmen that "to grant permission to women to preach in our Church is contrary to the teaching of the Holy Scriptures and the general practice of the Church." The Methodists in England took the same ground, and in America the Methodist Church declared that: "Woman is under a curse which subjects her to man... God has declared that woman shall not rule man but shall be subject to him."

This attitude of the Christian Church towards women may be contrasted with the emancipation which Buddhism brought to them. Even if the Buddha had at times seemed uncharitable to women in His estimation of their character, nevertheless the fact that He threw open the doors of His Order to them contributed largely to the place of respect women hold in Buddhist countries today. In the old religions of India women were classed among

children and imbeciles for purposes of protection. Buddhism gave them a position of equality among men, and raised women to an elevation never before attained by them in the Oriental World.

They who today deny the right of a woman to control her own body speak with the hardihood of invincible ignorance, or with the folly of those blind ones who in all ages have opposed the light of progress. Few there are to insist openly that woman remain a passive instrument of reproduction. Society is beginning to give ear to the promise of modern womanhood: "When you have ceased to chain me, I shall by the virtue of a free motherhood remake the world." Some women, in hot indignation, have talked of an oppressed sex, and have burned with the desire to set free their sisters. But, for woman's own honour, her advocates should uphold the doctrine that it was not man but chiefly superstition, masquerading in the guise of divine authority, that enslaved her, as it has enslaved man.

It is never by the choice of the wife that families are too numerous; on her devolves along with all the physical sufferings, and at least a full share of the privations, the whole of the intolerable domestic drudgery resulting from the excess. To be relieved from it would be hailed as a blessing by multitudes of women who now never venture to urge such a claim, but who would urge it, if supported by the moral feelings of the community.

As regards family limitation, the methods followed in the West are not easily adoptable in this country, both because of the cost involved and the conditions in which the masses of our people live. By legislation and the process of education it is, however, possible to raise the marriageable age still further, space the birth of children and limit the number of children. Even as regards the adoption of contraceptive methods, the Population Sub-committee of the National Planning Committee in India has recommended the inclusion in all medical colleges of courses on contraception, the training of some women doctors and nurses all over India in this regard, the establishment of Birth Control clinics where supplies should be free, especially in connection with maternity, welfare centres, health units and hospitals, and the encouragement of local manufacture of contraceptive goods in order to bring the cost within the reach of the masses.

CONSERVATION AND RENEWAL OF NATURAL RESOURCES

In the North-Central Province of Ceylon, buried in thick jungle, the ruins of once magnificent cities of the Sinhalese Kingdom are

found. The Mahavihara, the great monastic university, held six thousand students, and was second in size only to that of Nalanda in India. The broken and half-buried monoliths of palaces and monasteries and the ruined stupas rising above the endless jungle, were, before modern excavations had begun, the only signs that here was once the flourishing and beautiful city of Anuradhapura, of which even the memory was lost for centuries.

Is such the future of our own cities and civilization? More than one country is already bankrupt. Such bankruptcy has wiped out civilization in the past; there is no reason for thinking we can escape the same fate, unless we change our ways. Like the amoeba, the starfish, the crocodile, the humming-bird, and the tiger, man is a biological creature subject to biological laws. Though there is a struggle for existence in every seemingly peaceful scrap of forest or pond, there is a balance between plants and animals, prey and predators, so that no species multiplies without limits, but none is extinguished. Man, however, is the only organism known that lives by destroying the environment indispensable to his survival. The more intense the cultivation, the more fatal is its final result.

There is a fairly exact inverse proportion between living standards and rates of population increase in the different countries of the world. Wild Man possessed the inestimable advantage of a high death-rate, keeping down population and allowing long periods of recovery for the land. The sanitary revolution of modern times has saved innumerable people, but only to live more miserably.

Modern thought must be dynamic, not static; must consider the mutual inter-relations, instead of former elementalistic thinking; must, above all, distinguish between reality and symbol. The mistake in not distinguishing between symbols and things has highly dangerous practical consequences. Thus, favourable trade balances, in themselves only symbols, deceived mankind into thinking that what was hoarded was wealth, but actually the real wealth of the earth was exhausted.

The Indian Ocean is stained with the substance from which our children build bone and muscle and blood. We have moved into an untenable position by protracted and wholesale violation of natural laws; to re-establish ourselves we need only to bring our behaviour into conformity with natural limitations. There are two main tasks: First, control of population; second, conservation and renewal of natural resources.

Civilizations rise, mature, decline and pass away. Why? Some would have you believe because of wars, but that is not the

basic reason. Civilizations vanish when they fail to solve the problem of food (see pages 66-68). We live on the soil just as much as Vijaya and his band of followers did 2500 years ago. Without a fertile earth we should all wither and die. Every year there is less food-bearing soil on earth; and every year there are more mouths to be fed. Lord Boyd Orr, who recently resigned from the Food and Agriculturalist Organization of the United Nations, said that unless we check the annual loss of soil fertility, world-wide famine must inevitably result.

Most people, reading such warnings, are puzzled to know why, with scientific agriculture, powerful machines in place of oxen, and rapid transport and methods of storing crops, we should be in danger. To see this great world food problem in true perspective, we must go back as far as Walt Disney in "Fantasia". There he showed the earth cooling down, bubbling and boiling and blowing the holes we call volcanoes; pushing up the crinkles that we call mountain ranges. There was no life then. Nor will there be any in the future, if we permit the earth to become again as barren as it was when first it cooled and cupped water in those depressions we call oceans and seas.

The tragedy of the unusually severe floods within the river valleys of Ceylon is not understood by most of us. The truth is that the soil of our small island visibly bleeds to death all year long down our dirty rivers. The loss is literally incalculable: The problem, as soil conservationists see it, is whether we have a permanent or just a temporary country.

Our politicians, who are worrying about the enlargement of the Russian political sphere, might try worrying about the shrinkage of Lanka's fertile land. The latter may be even more important. It is, at least, a concern which has been with us a lot longer. Through wasteful, ignorant and greedy soil practices, our heritage is either ruined or seriously damaged.

Until some genius comes upon a synthetic nutrition pill, the food of the world will continue to be grown within a terrestrial skin of about a mammoth's depth. In Lanka it took about 1000 years of geologic process to form each inch of that top-soil. In terms of geological time, that soil can be and has been ravaged in a finger's snap. For instance, in the great seat of Sinhalese civilization, the Rajarata, each inch has been cropped off in as little as ten years. A torrential rainfall on a chena patch can undo the work of a thousand or more years in an afternoon.

The fact is, that the Sinhalese peasant, even though he is symbolically represented as a farmer fit to rule a kingdom, once the mud is washed from his body, never knew how to farm very well anyhow. From the time of the first settlements he undertook to adapt the agricultural methods of the pre-Aryans, a system most unsuitable to a terrain whipped by violent winds and tropical showers. The soil of Rajarata was denuded and ruined, and the Sinhalese lost a civilization. There can be no civilization without population, no population without food, and no food without top-soil. (See page 528).

Civilizations are bought at a price, and great populations lay a heavy toll upon the countries they inhabit, reducing to penury for all her riches their mother earth. We but nurse delusions when we think the human race approaches the millennium. Vast migrations of people will take place in the future as they have taken place in the past. Men increase while the fertile lands are shrinking, and the hunger for them will not diminish.

INJUSTICE OF PRIVATE PROPERTY IN LAND

The record of mankind is sufficiently squalid. Throughout most of his career man has been at the mercy of forces that he could not control, forces of fire and flood, of drought and storm and earthquake. His communities have been swept by pestilence and disease. With the sweat of his brow he has won a meagre living from Nature, toilsomely scratching the soil, precariously sharing and shooting other living creatures for his sustenance. And often he has gone hungry.

Most of the human beings who have lived have not known whence or when they would obtain their next meal, and, when at least they obtained it, it has rarely satisfied them. Most human beings, again, have been in servitude to other human beings.

As slaves, as serfs, as hired servants, as workmen, compelled by their indigence and ignorance to sell their labour to the highest bidder, they have lived miserably and narrowly, beaten, bullied, underfed, underslept, overworked, always at somebody's beck and call, always under orders, never masters of themselves, never by themselves.

Reading the pages of man's history, one is driven to the conclusion that lust and cruelty and pain have been the most continuously pervasive characteristics of man's life in the past; and one

concludes also that, if civilization continues on its present path, they will once again become its most pervasive characteristics in the future.

For the old evil is still at work; at work not merely in war when cruelty and horror are all that we are entitled to expect, but at work also in peace. During the years 1942 and 1943 it is estimated that between four and five million people starved to death in the Bengal famine. In the towns and villages in which the bodies of men, women, and children were falling to pieces through lack of food, **there** were rich men, rice hoarders, wheat hoarders, money-lenders, **landlords** and industrialists who defended themselves with armed guards, while they made enormous profits by retailing food to those of the starving people who could pay for it by selling their wives and their children into slavery and prostitution, and bartering the fragments of acres of land upon which their livelihood depended.

One who gives careful study to this lust and cruelty and the causes behind them can arrive at one conclusion only: That the evils of the present social and industrial system are not inherent in man or Nature, but are the results of Man's relation to property which prevents harmonious adjustment to Nature's laws and to other men.

Long ago, Herbert Spencer maintained, with convincing arguments and on purely ethical grounds, that "equity does not permit private property in land"; that no title to such property is valid in justice: or can be made valid by sale, bequest, long prescription, cultivation or improvement. The right of private ownership in land exists only by general consent; that being withdrawn, it ceases. "To deprive others of their right to the use of land, is to commit a crime only inferior in wickedness to the crime of taking away their lives or personal liberties."

In a community where the soil is treated as the property of but a portion of the people, some of these people from the very day of their birth must be at a disadvantage, and some will have an enormous advantage. Those who have no rights in the land will be forced to sell their labour to the landholders for what they can get; and, in fact, cannot live without the landlords' permission. Such a community must inevitably develop a class of masters and a class of serfs—a class possessing great wealth, and a class having nothing; and its political organization, no matter what its form, must finally become a virtual despotism. Let us illustrate:

Suppose an island, the soil of which is conceded to be the property of a few of the inhabitants. The rest of the inhabitants of this island must either hire land of these landowners, paying rent for it, or sell their labour to them, receiving wages. As population increases, the competition between the non-landowners for employment or the means of employment must increase rent and decrease wages until the non-landowners get merely a bare living, and the landowners get all the rest of the produce of the Island. Incidentally, there is, in point of fact, no need to "suppose" such an island. The conditions and processes described in this paragraph actually occurred in Ireland in the nineteenth century, with the aggravation that the landlords in that case were largely absentee Englishmen. It was to atone for this "grievous wrong inflicted on the Irish people by English misrule," as Lloyd George declared, that the British Exchequer advanced nearly £100,000,000 to put into operation the Land Purchase Act, designed to convert the Irish tenant into the owner of his holding (see page 154). As we know, de Valera, when placed in power in Ireland, repudiated this debt.

Karl Marx, the founder of scientific Socialism, makes it clear that the capitalist is able to exploit the worker, only because land monopoly has first reduced the worker to economic helplessness. Denied access to land, his only alternative to starvation is to seek such employment as the capitalist can offer him on such terms as the capitalist chooses to impose. The landless and workless man outside the gate of the factory is a more potent force in the fixing of wages than the trade union of the workers inside its walls.

The Marxian *Communist Manifesto* had, as its first demand, "abolition of property in land and application of all rents of land to public purposes." That Marx himself came to see that this reform was something more than a mere item in a long programme of reform—that it was fundamental—is shown by an unpublished essay of his, preserved in the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute at Moscow. He maintains that "land nationalisation" will "bring about a complete change in the relations between labour and capital, and will result in the final end of capitalist production, both industrial and agricultural. Then indeed will class differences and privileges disappear, together with the economic basis from which they have sprung. Society will become an association of free producers. Living on the labour of others will become

entirely a thing of the past. There will no longer be a Government or State whose existence is separated from society itself."

THE WAGE-SYSTEM EQUIVALENT TO SLAVERY

Out of the instinct of self-preservation in the struggle of animal life for food grew man's desire to possess property, and the resultant exploitative system, begetting the struggle between those who possessed property or "means of production" and those who were forced to sell their labour in order to live.

Labour is now only a chattel of the capitalist. He uses it merely as one of the tools in his plantations or a piece of machinery in his factory, to exact as much service as possible whilst it is possible to do so and to discard it in the same way as he does his worn-out tools and machinery.

Labour is driven to produce more, not in order to give better service, but to increase profits, every concession to labour is grudged, if it cannot be refused. The strain on the human beings who are wage-earners is not considered. Only the profit which the employer gets from their toil is what matters.

The reward of labour depended on the subsistence of the labourer. Wages equalled the amount of commodities necessary to feed and clothe a worker and his family, which represented the cost to society of "enabling the labourers to subsist and to perpetuate their race." This implied that what the worker received under a wage-system was the same as what he received under slavery or serfdom—in each case enough to cover the labourer's "wear and tear."

A society so constituted cannot endure very long—a society which provides a relatively small number of the world's citizens with a far larger share of the world's wealth than they need, while millions of other citizens, whose needs for life are as great as those of the others, are faced with periodic or constant starvation, has the seeds of dissolution in it and must finally come to an end.

Capitalism has put its formidable 'drive' into private property, enhancing the man of property's social power while diminishing his social responsibility, until an institution which may have been beneficent in the pre-capitalist Age has assumed many of the features of a social evil. Our society today is confronted with the task of adjusting the old institution of private property to a harmonious relationship between capital and labour. The method of pacific adjustment is to counteract the maldistribution of private property,

which capitalism inevitably entails, by arranging for a deliberate, rational and equitable control and redistribution of private property through the agency of the State. By controlling key industries the State can curb the excessive power over other peoples' lives which is conferred by the private ownership of such industries, and it can mitigate the ill effects of poverty by providing social services financed by high taxation of wealth.

If this pacific policy should prove inadequate, we may be fairly sure that the revolutionary alternative will overtake us in the shape of some form of Communism, which will reduce private property to vanishing-point. This seems to be the only practical alternative to an adjustment, because the maldistribution of private property through the impact of capitalism would be an intolerable enormity if not effectively mitigated by social services and high taxation.

That land ownership ever became a thing to sell and resell on the Rialtos of the world is one of the greatest misfortunes mankind has ever suffered. "The first man who, having enclosed a piece of ground, took thought to declare 'This is mine', and found people simple enough to believe him, was the real founder of civil society. How many crimes, wars and murders, how much misery and horror would have been spared the human race if some one, tearing down the pickets and filling the ditch, had cried to his fellows, 'Beware of listening to that impostor: you are lost if you forget that the land belongs to none and its fruits to all'". So wrote Jean Jacques Rousseau nearly two centuries ago. Now, after a century of Socialist discussion, after a century of reflection over such declarations as Proudhon's that "all private property is theft," we find ourselves free to take quite another view of property. We find it possible to start from a point diametrically opposite to the starting-point of Rousseau's "impostor."

Instead of assuming the need for an owner for each individual thing, we can begin now with an absolute Communist proposition; that everything belongs to all mankind, and try what result we can get by asking; to what persons or groups of people would it be best to assign the responsibility for protecting, controlling, exploiting or enjoying this, and the other divisions of everything? We can work forward from the existing order by way of a constructive principle instead of backward; by way of "*Struggle, Violence and Brute Force*," to that ideal society envisaged by Rousseau.

Communism as public control of private property has always existed and must be present in every culture, simple and developed. Complete Communism of land actually under cultivation is never

found in any primitive society, except in the isolated village communities known as the Mark. Production is a process in which man invests labour and intelligent foresight and at least as much of his wealth as is necessary for planting and for keeping himself alive while he works. No free human being will do it permanently without some legal guarantee safeguarding for him the results of his effort. The guarantee given to a group of people that the result of their efforts will be theirs to use or to give, is tantamount to individual plus communal ownership. Where there are slaves, pawns or serfs, there may be a class of people who work without any claim to the fruits of their labour. But such Communism turns men into slaves, serfs or pawns.

It needs little thought or argument to realise how this type of Communism differs from Russian Communism. When all the means of production are vested in a single hand, whether it be nominally that of "society" as a whole or that of a dictator, whoever exercises this control has complete power over us. In the hands of private individuals, what is called economic power can be an instrument of coercion, but it never becomes control over the whole life of a person. But when economic power is centralized as an instrument of political power, it creates a degree of dependence scarcely distinguishable from slavery. It has been well said that, in a country where the sole employer is the State, opposition means death by slow starvation.

A CO-OPERATIVE COMMONWEALTH

To understand the labour-question, we ought to realise that its most fundamental problem is not so much a question of how to do justice to the labourer as how to do justice to labour itself, because the very nature of labour has been perverted by giving it only an economic value. As long as the true value of labour has not been restored, all solutions regarding labour and property will prove to be only superficial remedies.

It is not sufficiently realised that a better distribution and control will not by itself solve the problems of property. Its evils are not limited to the present excessive inequalities. The modern forms of property have to a considerable extent perverted the nature of property itself by treating wealth and money as if they were the same thing. Whenever these two are indiscriminately intermingled, socio-economic life will be afflicted with the malady of usury. It is very doubtful—to say the least—whether property can be cleansed

from this spurious element to fulfil its social function of providing for the needs of man and society, unless the social order itself be overhauled and reconstructed. The perversion of both labour and property is in the last instance due to a wrong social order based on a false concept of human nature and society.

The most vital consideration when we are dealing with human beings is the fact that they are human. Now human nature is as variegated as the colours of the rainbow. Each one of us starts life with an inheritance going back to the jungle. The theologists call it 'original sin', and, in spite of an attempt at the font to eradicate this undesirable legacy, it seems to dog our footsteps all our lives.

Some renounce the pomps and vanities of this wicked world. They become Saints or Arahats. It is not with them we are concerned because they have their own reward. We have about three million wage earners in Ceylon, and very few of them are likely to be canonised or become Arahats. We have, therefore, got to look after the interest of all the others. Who are they? Many of them are plantation and industrial workers. They say they want control of their industries by the State. The reason they give is that in their industries they are subject to conditions which no self-respecting free-born citizen ought to tolerate.

They do not object to working. Most of them work very hard and quite a lot of them earn good wages, but what they say is this: We can work all our lives for a daily or monthly wage, which at times enables us to live quite adequately; but if we fall sick or the employer takes a dislike to us, or people do not want so much tea, rubber or coconuts, we are thrown on the dust heap just as ruthlessly as the dirt which is tipped on the dumps which face our back doors. We want some control which will recognise human beings for what they are, men not machines.

Socialists are looking for a constructive principle by which our present exploitative system may give place to a "Co-operative commonwealth"; they are also seeking forms of industrial control which will meet certain basic needs—the conduct of industry for the service of the people, not for the profit of the few: the application to industry of the essential ideas of democracy, so as to give man as worker at least as much sense of self-government and responsibility as belongs to man as citizen: the initiation of a practical policy equating the demands of social justice with the all important considerations of increasing production and full employment. These requirements can be met by a diversity of means.

For the immediate future the most important task is to devise simple, flexible forms of control that can be applied over a wide range of industry, in such a way as to bring the representatives of the workers into the directorial boards and thus participate in the control of economic policy as full partners with the employers. The next task is to convert the present hesitant and ambiguous attitude of the co-operative leadership into zeal to play a constructive part in the building of the new society. The third is to create new human incentives to replace the weakened influence of "the carrot and the stick" on which capitalism relied.

The modern "co-operative" idea was born in the 19th century, in a small Lancashire town, and it was incarnate in the form of a retail shop. It enjoyed no fostering aid from the State, or from wealthy business men or learned economists: "not many mighty, not many noble" were numbered among its adherents. But its own inherent vitality has enabled it to spread and flourish on a world scale, and into all kinds of economic activity, so that we find today co-operative production, marketing, credit and banking, and consumers' stores. And Governments, in all parts of the world, are devoting more and more thought, and more and more material aid, to the development of the co-operative idea.

Socialists foresee the eventual realization of a "Co-operative commonwealth" in which non-profit enterprise will have gradually supplanted private business in every field, from the extraction of raw materials to the sale of finished goods. State ownership would in this case be extended to such projects as road transport, insurance and banking, which are now under private control. In such a society, the motivation of economic activity would be shifted from the quest of profits to the satisfying of needs. Economic co-operation breed social harmony, just as private gain breeds the discords arising from exploitation. The principles of democracy could under such circumstances be more fully realized than heretofore has been possible. In this view the end result of co-operation is not only a sounder economy but a better society.

The co-operative movement appeals strongly to those who are convinced of the need for comprehensive social change, yet are unwilling to accept the methods and consequences of the "revolutionary overthrow of the existing order." Particularly in this country the movement has gained the active support of the Buddhist Sangha who, like many others, see in co-operation a "middle way" between the extremes of Capitalism and Communism.

The problem of holdings is of great importance in any agricultural country, since the size of holdings determines greatly the yield from land. In Ceylon the holdings are very small in size and are, as such, mainly responsible for unfavourable yield from land. Consolidation of holdings, as has been attempted in countries like India, is a very slow process, and it will take years to consolidate the holdings by means of propaganda and persuasion. If permanent improvements are to be effected, the problem of holdings has to be successfully tackled. Two remedial measures that have now come to the forefront are Collective farming and Co-operative farming.

Any type of farming, collective or co-operative, is definitely better than ordinary means of consolidating holdings. But it is not easy to decide which of the two is better. It must be admitted on all hands that introduction of collective farming must be a very drastic and revolutionary a measure as it implies elimination of individual ownership of land. Specially in a country like Ceylon, where customs and conventions are deep-rooted and too much pride goes with individual ownership of land, such a measure is bound to provoke much discontent. Again, the diversity of the tenure system makes it very difficult to farm the holdings collectively as in Soviet Russia. The number of intermediaries is so great that, unless they are completely eliminated, collectivisation of holdings can hardly be a practical proposition.

Therefore, taking Ceylon conditions into consideration, co-operative farming seems to be more suitable than collective farming. The State's policy should be, to provide holdings of land at the family level of size, for all its citizens. Cultivation of small vegetable plots and the like will continue to be carried on by the individual owner. As in Soviet Russia, referred to on page 422, such 'private' exploitation of the land, and also activity in industry and trade, will be permitted to anybody, so long as he conducts this cultivation, or industry, or trade, by his own labour and that of his family. Any outsiders participating will do so on the basis of co-operative ownership, so that no man shall be in a position to exploit, for his own profit, the labour of his fellows. The rest of the holding in a given locality will be cultivated, harvested and the produce distributed, as large units collectively by the owners: in tea, rubber, coconuts, paddy, or other most suitable product. The fruits will accrue to the owners on the basis of their contribution by way of their land and their labour.

The co-operative way must be extended, to take in commerce and industry as well. Already, in different regions and in different

types of industrial enterprises, capitalists of the more enlightened type have created and worked schemes of profit sharing co-partnership. The experience gained in the working of these schemes by private concerns has now provided enough data to enable Governments to institute co-partnership in industry by legislation. The workers will participate in profits, and, by their representatives on directorial boards, they will participate in management and policy as well. There will thus be achieved democracy in the economic, as well as in the political sphere.

What will you achieve by this system? You will furnish to each individual an incentive to work. You will satisfy his deep, instinctive and legitimate longing for some possession of his own, while you will render impossible the accumulation of disproportionate wealth in a few hands by greed or fraud or force. Co-operation is a grand movement with immense possibilities. It can be applied to every phase of life; nay, rather, it may even be said to be a way of life. It embodies the Buddha's idea of community in ownership and sharing which is the basis on which His Order of the Sangha is established. If it is in fact possible for man in his social state to realise the ideal of serenity, contentment, peace and harmony which the individual can realise by following the precepts of the Buddha, the way to realise this possibility is the way of co-operation.

A SOCIALIST ECONOMY

The world must somehow hammer out a new technique which will remove the frictional contacts between the Haves and the Have-nots, and set up, instead of the present exploitative system, a new spirit of co-operative endeavour. If we wish for a society in which men and women can make the best use of their innate capabilities, and in which they feel they are taking part in tasks belonging to the whole community, we must do away with the capitalist order. The urgent task is to raise the standards of the depressed majority. We can see that there is gross inequality of opportunity for the individuals of different social classes, and consequent large-scale wastage of talent as well as injustice.

The economic and political system that can remedy the injustice, and prevent the wastage, is Socialism—the system in which the control and ownership of land and industry is in the hands of those whose work produces food from the land and industrial products from the factories. In such a society there need be no diversion of energy to the internal destructiveness of a class struggle, no mass frustration and consequent cynicism or apathy.

That capitalism has yielded a tremendous advance in material civilization for a greatly increased population is not because those persons who developed it were actuated by any passionate desire that all should enjoy the abundant life; what it has done it has not done from intention, but as an incident in the pursuit of pecuniary self-interest. Like other forms of social organisation it has evolved: it is not necessarily immutable and permanent. Like other institutions it also can be shaped and moulded to serve human purposes. One of the main problems for solution is how to control the vastly increased powers of wealth-production, so that by their exercise Man can build up a civilization in which all will enjoy the fullest measure of freedom for self-realisation and self-expression.

Real Socialism demands a complete change in the character of man. When man becomes entirely unselfish and willing to act and work, not only for himself and dependants, but also in a manner that will benefit the whole people, even making sacrifices to that end, then that is Socialism.

The core of Socialist doctrine is the requirement that the ownership and control of the primary means of production, distribution, and exchange shall be vested in the whole people and operated by representative agencies to provide a maximum of economic well-being. In an ethical sense, Socialism seeks to create that material environment most conducive to the growth of harmonious and constructive relationships among men.

It is precisely because Socialists deny that such harmony is attainable within a profit-motivated society that they insist upon the transformation of the economic structure. Socialists oppose profit-making as the incentive of enterprise, not only on moral but on economic grounds. When production is geared to the rate of profit, the result is often found to be a restricted output at high prices, rather than a plentiful supply at low prices. In support of this contention the Socialist points to the fact of widespread under-consumption in the presence of idle land, labour, and factories, and to the deliberate destruction of goods to maintain price levels.

The roots of this condition, lie in the grossly unequal distribution of income. The wage-earning population receives too small a share to purchase what it needs, whereas the owners of capital are enabled to live luxuriously, accumulate larger surpluses, or divert their funds to interest bearing investment.

The indictment levelled against capitalist enterprise is basically Marxian: that, whereas the ultimate source of all wealth is labour, a large portion of the wealth currently produced is intercepted by

non-producers through the instrumentality of rent, interest, or profits. The consequences of this practice exhibit a division of society into opposed classes, extremes of poverty and wealth, huge wastage of resources, the spread of corporate monopoly, unemployment, and recurrent international warfare. This self-destructive process can be brought to an end only by reclaiming for society the ownership of its wealth-producing agencies. On the issue of how the change may be accomplished, Socialists depart from orthodox Marxism in relying upon the success of peaceful, constitutional means.

A Socialist economy is judged by the ends achieved by policy and not necessarily by the means adopted to achieve the end. This may seem high heresy to many orthodox and academic Socialists, who tend to lay greater store by methods rather than by objectives. But it is the only realistic attitude one can take towards a contentious problem. Even Karl Marx, who contends that "the real task is to change the world," admits the possibility of a peaceful revolution. He writes: "Some day the workers must conquer political supremacy, in order to establish the new organization of labour; they must overthrow the old political system whereby the old institutions are sustained. . . . of course it must not be supposed to imply that the means to this end will be everywhere the same. We know that special regard must be paid to the institutions, customs and traditions of various lands, and we do not deny that there are certain countries, such as the United States and England, in which the workers may hope to secure their ends by peaceful means." We must exhaust the utmost possibilities of democratic action before we start on the revolutionary road. Social change need not be identified with a system of violence, irreligion, tyranny and individual suppression.

TRANSITION TO SOCIALISM

It is the Socialist view that, in common with the outmoded economic systems of the past, capitalism must in turn give way to an improved method of production and distribution. A transition to Socialism is regarded as the logical next step in economic evolution. This sense of the reasonableness of its demands underlies the Socialist conviction that the change can be made over a period of time without very serious disruption of existing institutions.

Departing from Marxian doctrine at this point, Socialists refuse to concede that the parliamentary State must necessarily be

dominated by the property-owning class. Government is regarded instead as having been brought under popular control by means of universal suffrage and the grant of civil liberties. The task remains to convert the State to a program of Socialism through the conquest of public opinion.

Specifically, the plan is to use three main agencies. A Socialist political party will organize citizens as voters to elect sympathetic officials and to sponsor remedial legislation. Workers are to be organized in strong, class-conscious unions; their function will be to win immediate concessions. Finally, both consumers' and producers' co-operatives will be fostered to promote the principles of non-profit enterprise and improve the standard of living.

The inauguration of a Socialist economy is to proceed by successive stages within the framework of the existing State. The principal resources and industries of the nation will be acquired gradually from their private owners under the right of eminent domain. Compensation will be paid, on the basis of physical values of the property—payment taking the form of low-interest-bearing bonds. Steeply graded income and inheritance taxes would be used to reduce excessive wealth and prevent new accumulations.

The order in which the means of production would be socialized contemplates early acquisition of such public utilities as road transport, insurance, industries, landing and shipping in Harbours, and the banking system; following this, the gradual absorption of such natural-resource properties as mining, and industries engaged in the manufacture of capital goods, and units of a monopolistic nature. Small-scale distribution, handicraft, and agriculture would remain unaffected by the process, although brought within the scope of national planning. Especially in these latter fields, co-operative societies for the production and marketing of agricultural produce would be established.

A NATIONAL PLANNING BOARD

The ownership and control of socialized properties would be lodged not with a single centralized government board but with a variety of public agencies—local, regional, and national. Thus local communities would own and operate such ventures as gas and electric service, municipal bus lines, housing, health and recreation; regional units would control co-operative credit and marketing and processing industries as rice mills and sugar refineries; and separate national agencies would be entrusted with such operations as a

unified banking system, transportation on trunk routes, seaport operations, insurance, heavy industries and overseas trade.

Over this whole structure of diversified ownership and management of enterprise would be established a permanent National Planning Board. The nature and volume of production would be gauged by the estimated needs of both consumers and producers; labour, machinery, materials, and technical ability would be allocated to each industry as required; the whole process would be co-ordinated by a balancing of the factors required to supply the needs of consumers and to replace and expand the means of production. Such a co-ordination of economic processes, together with an equitable distribution of total income, would keep the economy operating steadily and continuously, free from unhealthy booms and depressions.

Socialists refuse to concede the pre-eminence of profit-making as the incentive to efficient production. They point out, first, that the chance to acquire profits is restricted to a very small portion of the population—those who possess capital or the means of production. The overwhelming majority in a capitalist society, the wage earners, are motivated by the simple desire to earn a livelihood. For them, Socialists claim, the opportunities for a secure and comfortable living under Socialism would be infinitely greater than those they now enjoy.

Although acquisitiveness is a common characteristic of human beings, its intensity has been unduly heightened under competitive capitalism. Devotion to the public service, the desire to make the world a little better, to leave our land a little happier than we found it, or sheer pleasure in accomplishment—these are alternative motivations common among men of prominence at all times. Socialism contemplates a scale of wages, salaries and bonuses for all types of services that is consistent with the formula; "from each according to his ability, to each according to the value of his work." In broad outline, this would differ little from wage and salary schedules under capitalism, except that inflated executive incomes and investment profits would be eliminated.

With the establishment of "economic democracy" through co-operative ownership, the State will become more truly representative of the popular will than has ever been possible in capitalist society. Class divisions would no longer have a basis for existence. The corrupting effect of business interests on government would be removed. Through the exercise of popular suffrage, together

with the right of recall and referendum, public opinion would be assured of direct control of both its political and economic representatives.

Similarly, with the exploitation of class by class destroyed, Socialists foresee the creation of a social atmosphere marked by a degree of harmony greater than ever before realised. Buddhism is an ethical doctrine pointing out a way of life to be lived and realised, and as such it has to be synthesised with a political organisation. And if we take the system of the Order of the Buddha's Sangha as a guide for the set-up of this political organisation it must be democratic and Socialistic. (See pages 593 and 595). There has been much irrelevant talk about the contention that Buddhism should be made the State Religion of Ceylon. Buddhism is not a religion, in the accepted meaning of the word "religion". The term "State Religion" is used in reference to Buddhism to mean a State which is governed according to Buddhist principles. And there is nothing objectionable in such a statement, as nearly three-fourths of the population of Ceylon are in fact Buddhists. And other religionists here can have nothing to grouse about, because these principles are all, as indicated on page 553 of this Book, functions applicable to the good government of any State whether Hindu, Christian or Islamic.

Buddhism is far from being the negative religion that many who do not understand its teachings term it : it is, on the contrary, the most positive known. And, as Aldous Huxley in his book, *Ends and Means*, declares : "Buddhism shows itself decidedly superior to Christianity" in warning people "that they must take their share of responsibility for the social order in which they find themselves."

EDUCATION OF THE CITIZEN

This is not the place for discussing either the principles or the machinery of national education : of the little which is fit to be said on such a subject in a treatise like the present, the smallest portion only can be alluded to. The aim is social unity.

Without entering into disputable points, it may be asserted without qualification, that the goal of all intellectual training for the mass of the people, should be to cultivate common sense; to qualify them for forming a sound practical judgment of the circumstances by which they are surrounded. Whatever, in the intellectual department, can be superadded to this, is chiefly ornamental; this

is the indispensable groundwork on which education must rest. Let this object be acknowledged and kept in view as the thing to be first aimed at, and there will be little difficulty in deciding either what to teach or in what manner to teach it.

The goal of mankind is knowledge; that is the one ideal placed before us by Buddhism. The fundamental doctrine of Buddhism is that all human misery proceeds from ignorance (*avidya*), "being without knowledge." The Buddha's idea of salvation is ultimately based on knowledge (*vidya*), and knowledge is to Him the recognition of the nature of things. *Avidya* is much more than mere lack of information on this or that subject.

In early Buddhism, *avidya* implied ignorance of the true nature of the world, a mistaken notion of ourselves and our relations to other beings; or the inability to see things in their true perspective (*yathā-bhūtaṃ*). This original meaning has now become lost in the limited and parochial one, of ignorance of the Four Noble Truths, given to it by Commentators. The latter, probably, made the change to bring it into conformity with the Sāṅkhya concept of *avidya*, which is the absence of "discriminative knowledge" (*viveka jnana*) enunciated in the fourth of the "Four Truths" of the Sāṅkhya.*

The Buddha's first discourse is entitled: *Dhamma-cakka-pavattana Sutta*, which, although it literally means "Turning of the Wheel of the Law," really means, "Presentation of the Law of Nature of Things". The Buddha based His philosophic theory upon the affirmation of a moral nature in man, and the existence of a moral world order. Having the moral law within himself, man is justified in assuming that the world is such that the demands of this law can be met. Therefore, man must become intelligent. Having attained knowledge, man would do the right thing, he would be good. Without knowledge, man was in danger of acting wrongly. Further the Buddha said that man could, through knowledge, have some influence upon his destiny, here and hereafter.

Buddhism is the only religion which attempts to raise the ethos of man to a higher level through education and through that alone.

* The four truths of the Sāṅkhya as given in the *Sāṅkhyapravacanabhāṣya* are: (1) That from which we deliver ourselves is pain. (2) Deliverance is the cessation of pain. (3) The cause of pain is want of discrimination between *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa*, which produces the continued union. (4) The means of deliverance is *viveka jnana*, the discerning knowledge with which the individual could discriminate between 'self', which is in bondage to his body, and the rest of his constituents which are not the self. (See also Appendix Two).

Without education it is impossible for a man to become in truth a Buddhist. There are other religions which speak of 'knowledge', but this knowledge is confined to knowledge of God. The primary duty of a Buddhist State must, therefore, be the education of its children: in fact the first charge on its revenue must be education. When the Ceylon Government introduced Free Education, it took a step in conformity with the Buddha's teaching. Whereas the Christian Church, in embarking on the education of the citizen, took upon itself an intellectual burden never contemplated by its Founder, and one which it is unfitted to bear. The function of the educationist is to create and nurture an inquiring and critical mind. When did the Catholic Church ever allow its members to use their critical faculties?

Closely related to the principle of self-development is the deepening Buddhist faith in Universal Free Education. Enlightened mass decisions are clearly impossible without widespread educational opportunity. But, beyond this, the goal of Buddhism—self-realization—demands continuing access to vocational and cultural advancement, and to every field of knowledge. Working for peace and the general welfare is the essence of all true education and all true religion. It is the Eightfold Path in action. When the education of youth goes wrong, sooner or later all goes wrong.

In Ceylon today there is a race between the effects of ignorance and those of knowledge. Ceylon, it is said, now enjoys independence in the political sphere. Economic independence is in the offing. But neither of these will be complete without intellectual independence; and there can be no intellectual independence in any country so long as religious dictators are allowed to tell our children: "Accept our recipe for happiness or you will be eternally damned."

This 'dictatorship' was seen at work during the General Election of May, 1952, when the Catholics were forced to vote for particular candidates. It was not an elevating sight to see the Church Fathers driving their docile flock, to pastures chosen by the Catholic hierarchy. We detest the authoritarian system which, as in Russia, produces "slaves of the State". But the educational system of the Catholic Church is directed to produce a baser kind of slave-citizens: "slaves of the Church."

Recently Lord Soulbury, the Governor General of Ceylon, deplored that our children are taught "*what* to think" more often than they are taught "*how* to think". The Catholic educational system demands that children should know *what* to think of a historical event or a religious doctrine rather than *how* to think.

If they wish to appease the malice of the powers-that-be, they must be able to report what the "society of the supernatural order" has to say about these matters, and must not show that they are capable of judging or interpreting them for themselves. It is a simple and inevitable step from this intellectual Yes-man's land to the total State where slave-citizens are conditioned to do what they are told and never to think or to ask questions. In this respect the half educated State is more dangerous than complete ignorance. Freedom for the individual begins in the mind, and it is there that independence of judgment and of thought must be inculcated. Even a nation which enjoys complete political independence and a reasonably high standard of living—a much greater degree of "freedom from want" than we can claim at present—is not truly free until its people are liberated from subservience.

The Kremlin and the Vatican, as two systems of authoritarian control over men's minds, threaten our intellectual liberties today. Alike as the two poles of the earth, these powers occupy the extremes of the moral universe, but they represent the same intellectual climate—the climate of authoritarian control over the human mind.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The decision of the Ceylon Government to teach religion in State schools was deplored by the Most Revd. Dr. Thomas Cooray, Archbishop of Colombo, at the prize-giving of a Convent recently. The Archbishop said that the Government could not be the teacher of religion and must not try to usurp that function. He said that the Government had no mandate for this, and that they must realise that if they took this step, it would only endanger all religions and also bring about much disorder in the country: the only way to have harmony in the country was for the Government to observe complete neutrality in the matter of religion.

This sort of activity by the Catholic hierarchy is a direct and dangerous invasion of civil rights. No one disputes the right of the Christian Church to teach and preach "knowledge of God" and "worship of God" among their members. Since that is what they believe and practise, it is not only their right but their duty. But when their campaign is carried beyond their own membership, it becomes an invasion of other people's rights.

In our schools the pupil comes into contact with every major social interest—save one. With scrupulous regard for religious

neutrality, we have excluded all instruction in religion from general education. Religion is thus discounted in the eyes of youth. It does not seem important. As a result, recent generations of Ceylonese youth have grown up ignorant of religion and indifferent to it.

After the introduction of Buddhism to Ceylon, Devanampiya Tissa, in emulation of Asoka, who made Buddhism the State Religion of India, made it the State Religion of Ceylon also, and it existed as such for over 2000 years until 1815, when the country went under a Christian Power.

Asoka, in making Buddhism the State Religion of India, was in no way unfaithful to the Buddha's teaching of toleration, as Dr. Stokes of Yale University, the American scholar and divine, makes clear in his book, *Church and State in the United States*. In fact, Dr. Stokes makes the forthright declaration that Asoka's experiment in religious freedom was the first in history. Even Plato, with his revolutionary political doctrines, recommended imprisonment for those not conforming to the religion of his ideal Republic. And Dr. Stokes goes on to say that Asoka's liberal example obtained no wide following.

Asoka's wisdom is exhibited no less in his recognition of Buddhism as the State religion than in his practice of toleration. This latter principle has been extended in modern times to the advocacy of the State's religious neutrality; and Dr. Stokes has diagnosed a severe defect in this system when he remarked: "The failure up to the present time to work out any satisfactory constitutional plan for providing a broad basis for religious education for pupils of our public schools; and the tendency to encourage a multitude of weak sects with all the evils of extreme denominationalism."

In these days, there is much talk of the Middle Way. A critic may well doubt, whether those who talk most loudly of this "Middle Way," really understand what it means. In the old and great days of Ceylon, education was fostered entirely at the temples and monastic schools. Modern times have witnessed the destruction of this system of learning, and the consequent disappearance from Ceylon education of the broad-based religious teaching, which Dr. Stokes, along with so many clear-thinking educationists, recognises as a character-building force, and therefore a necessity in education.

The modern home is notoriously incompetent to teach religion. The Sunday School, meeting one hour a week, manned by volunteer teachers, cannot command the respect of pupils accustomed to the discipline and prestige of the public school—which has them five days a week. A way must be found, therefore, to incorporate the

teaching of religion in the public school system if we are to reverse the downward trend of religious literacy and of respect for religion itself.

The function of the school is to provide the growing child, at each stage of his growth, with the knowledge that will initiate him into an intelligent participation in the cultural values and the practical responsibilities which make up the life of the community. It is on this principle that the curriculum includes instruction in science, art, economics, politics, history, literature, even business. Whatever the community holds to be significant in its own life tends to find its way into the curriculum of the school. But the school does not seem to know that there is such a thing as religion in Ceylonese society.

The seat of the problem lies in the complexities of the several forms of religion in Ceylon. But the schools do not exclude political science because the community is divided into supporters of political parties of different ideologies. Nor does it exclude economics because there are capitalists and Communists in the community. If these controversial subject matters can be taught without doing violence to partisan prejudices, religion can also be taught without doing violence to the beliefs of the Buddhists, Hindus, Christians and Muslims.

By "teaching religion" we do not mean indoctrination and the inculcation of religious devotion. We do not advocate worship exercises or prayer in public schools. We have every reason to be apprehensive when the State undertakes to direct the religious devotion of its youth. That way lies totalitarianism.

But if "teaching religion" is taken in the sense of imparting knowledge *about* religion—as a phenomenon of our culture—it is neither partisan nor impracticable. Our schools could develop a subject matter and a technique of instruction that would give religion the same status in public education which is now given in history, economics, literature and art. Religion can be presented with such objectivity that doctrinal issues are transcended and the student is left free to form his own convictions.

EDUCATION MUST BE SECULAR AND ETHICAL

An urgent need in a modern world is that man should acquire scientific habits of thought, an understanding of himself and the world in which he lives. This is exactly what the Buddha tried to teach mankind 2500 years ago. Therefore, our principal aim today

must be the promotion of a secular and ethical system of education. This education must fit the child morally and intellectually to play its best part in the social life of our time. Doubtless all educationists have a similar end in view, so that, for the Buddhists, the operative word in the statement of this aim is "secular."

But this is not the viewpoint of the Catholic Church. For which, according to the encyclical of Pope Pius XI on education, "society into which man is born, where through Baptism he receives the divine life of grace, is the Church; a society of the supernatural order", and "all education belongs pre-eminently to the Church, by reason of a double title in the supernatural order, conferred exclusively upon her by God Himself." To this, the Buddhist replies that morality can be and should be divorced from the beliefs in the supernatural found in the religions. To base morality on supernatural sanctions is to base it on a quaking morass.

Religious dogma petrifies moral codes so that they cannot evolve naturally in harmony with man's social progress. Morality is a matter of social relationship. It arose naturally as soon as men came together to live in communities.

The gods have always reflected the moral standards of their worshippers. Man moralises his gods. For this reason the morality enshrined in supernatural religion always lags behind the developing moral conscience of a community.

To free the young mind from the shackles of a rigid creed, or better to see that these shackles never threaten the developing mind, is perhaps the greatest step to be made in building that new world in which each man shall be free to develop his best potentialities. It could be a reality, here, now. We have the knowledge, the control of natural resources to achieve it, had we the will. Clear, fearless thinking is needed. For this there must be minds unclouded by the superstitions and prejudices of religious emotionalism.

MODERN VEHICLES OF EDUCATION: THE PRESS, THE CINEMA AND THE RADIO

In our generation, the field of education has been enormously widened by the development of Newspapers, Cinemas and School Broadcasts.

Although the system of school broadcasting suffers from the disadvantage that the teacher's physical presence is lacking, so

that his young hearers may not have the fullest incentive to concentrate on the lesson, there is the great compensating advantage that one teacher and one lecture reaches a country-wide audience.

The value of the Cinema as a means of instruction and an agent for the spread of cultural ideas is being increasingly appreciated. As we approach the dawn of a new day in industrial life, we realise the worker will have more time for recreation and self-improvement. How will this time be spent? Perhaps in the near future we shall see adult education, with its different ramifications, recognized in a great variety of ways that are not being considered at the present time. If so, the popular appeal of the film and its vast potentialities will make it an invaluable aid to the new education in the days which lie immediately before us.

The Press has become an immensely powerful force in national life, and the important part it plays in moulding the political character of a nation leads us to suggest for consideration the establishment of a "People's Press" in Ceylon; a Press owned by the State but controlled by an autonomous body like the B.B.C. One of its main purposes would be the educational and ethical uplift of the people. In its presentation of the news and commentaries thereon, it would be by no means a blind and uncritical supporter of the Government which might happen to be in power. On the contrary, criticism of Government measures, and exposure of incompetence; corruption and dishonesty, would be expected of it at all times. Even in Soviet Russia, currently reputed to be the seat of absolute tyranny, the State newspapers often utter trenchant criticisms of the administration's policies.

If one of the main functions of the Press is to mould the character of a nation, a privately owned Press is notoriously incompetent to perform this function; and, even if competent, it would be the wrong body to do it. The motives which must direct a privately owned Press, run for profit, do not permit it to function as an uplifting agent for the national character. Its aim is profit: to achieve this aim it must have wide circulation and great revenue from advertisements. This first of these two objects is facilitated by the use of cheap and sensational matter, pandering to the low and vulgar: the second requires that nothing shall be introduced which might offend powerful commercial interests, even when they run counter to national interests. Thus, a privately-owned Press can neither be independent, nor safeguard national interests, nor even be used as an instrument to elevate the ethical standard of a people.

It is said that the National Press is a product of the national character. But though there is perhaps some truth in this statement, it represents only one side of the picture. The private Press set to work on the assumption that the great mass of the people had thought only for trivial things, and it designed its newspapers and their contents accordingly. In so doing, it encouraged the public to interest themselves in trivialities and to neglect the responsibilities of democratic citizenship, thus fostering the growth of the very type of mentality whose existence it had initially assumed.

The first requirement of a National Press is that it should so present the news as to place events in their proper perspective. For a newspaper exerts a profound influence upon its readers' sense of values. A journal which devotes its front page to the account of a sensational murder and pays scant attention to the previous day's Parliamentary debate will inevitably create in the minds of its readers a false impression of the relative importance of these two events.

Today we live in an era of net sales certificates. The tremendous responsibilities of the Press are forgotten in the drive for increased circulation. If a newspaper subordinates all else to the quest for large profits, it cannot fulfil what we have declared to be the main function of a National Press.

As the control of the Press becomes centered in a few hands, statesmen are tempted to win over newspaper proprietors to suppress criticism of their activities and to further their own policies and propaganda. One of the first acts of the dictator on achieving power is to muzzle the Press by force. The democratic statesman may not employ such crude methods: his technique is more subtle. He cultivates relations of personal friendship with the newspaper proprietor; he may bestow, or promise to bestow, honours or titles upon him and make him and his newspapers tools of his policy. If the Press is to perform a real service to the people, it must function without being subjected to these "wire-pullings": and it must not prostitute itself by appealing to the baser instincts of the mob.

The straightforward presentation of the truth, a refusal to suppress unpalatable facts, honest comment and fearless criticism—these are the standards to which the journalist should adhere. The abandonment of these standards throughout a considerable part of the Ceylon Press is to be attributed, not to the apostasy of the professional journalist, but to his subordination to the newspaper proprietor, who does not appreciate the duty a newspaper owes to its public.

As a State Press is one facet of the Government's educational policy, and as education is in nowise required to be remunerative (that is in the material sense), it follows that the State Press need not at all be run with an eye to profit. It would even be permissible to work at a loss. But its wide circulation, and consequent substantial revenue from advertisements, would at least ensure it with certainty against any loss. There would in all probability be some profits, and these would be devoted entirely to the improvement of its various features and educational services. There would be a considerable free list for schools, community centres, public libraries etc.

A State-owned Press could absorb all the functions now exercised by the *Government Gazette*, by the simple means of a daily supplement. There would then be no need to continue the present practice of inserting Government notices in the privately-owned Press. At present, most Government notifications are published in at least three different papers in English, four in Sinhalese, two in Tamil. This unnecessary and wasteful repetition would be avoided. The People's Press, published in three languages, would be read by all, and there would be ample publicity for all the requirements of the Government.

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN CEYLON

As a result of the investigations made by Lord Soulbury's Commission, Ceylon became, by treaty with the United Kingdom, a self-governing member of the British Commonwealth of Nations. Ceylon thus experienced a change of status involving an entire change in its Governmental machinery. It became necessary to draw up and promulgate a written constitution; for in the case of Ceylon, there did not exist all the long line of precedents and conventions which have made the common law and constitution in Great Britain. In the case of a nation emerging from a Colonial dependency to self-governance, a written constitution is an evident necessity. The one which was devised for Ceylon was probably drawn up as carefully, and was therefore as nearly perfect, as was humanly possible. Nevertheless, as was humanly inevitable, certain serious defects, and resultant discontents, have made their appearance in these early years.

The element which has evoked the greatest disappointment is the Senate, the Second Chamber of the Legislative body. In the general opinion, it has proved to be useless. It was designed to be

a check on hasty and ill-considered action by the House of Representatives; to be a field for constructive criticism of Government measures and for deliberation, in a comparatively non-controversial climate, on major social and political issues; to make available to the National Legislature the services of able, mature and experienced men who, for one reason or another, are not members of the House of Representatives elected by the general vote. The overwhelming verdict of the public, to which the only dissentients would probably be the Government and the Senators themselves, is that it has not discharged a single one of these functions.

On the contrary, it is held that the Senate proceedings have been a mere parrot-like repetition of those in the Lower House, and therefore a futile waste of time and public money; and that its personnel, far from embodying the intention indicated above, are mostly the nominees of the Governmental Party, chosen not for merit but for material services rendered to that Party; or because they are related to, or intimate friends of, powerful members of the Party; and that in some cases, indeed, they have literally bought these seats in the Senate by outright payments to individual members of the lower House (a process which the system of choice certainly renders possible). Thus the Senate is not only unnecessary and futile, but actually mischievous and menacing, inasmuch as its membership can be achieved by corruption; and corruption in public life is the evil which is admitted on all hands to be rife in Ceylon, and to be the greatest enemy to the country's progress.

It has, therefore, become a major political issue, whether the Senate should not be abolished; and, if so, whether any substitute should be devised. It must be admitted that, in its present record, the Senate cannot escape the charge of futility. But against this, it must be said that so far no political question has come up, of so vital a nature that the Senate's independent action would have been decisive or useful. In only one particular has it been of any use, even to the Government itself; namely, that by the Constitution two Cabinet Ministers must be Senators. The Prime Minister is thus enabled to take into his Cabinet two Ministers who may have been unable to secure election to the other House, but who are of high value in the Government, either from their outstanding capacity and astuteness, or for other and less creditable reasons.

The defects in the Senate are, therefore, grave in character, and as there appears to be no early prospect of their being removed, or mitigated, it is for serious consideration whether the Senate should not be abolished, without any substitute being created. This

view is being increasingly put forward by thoughtful people. The one point of substance—*viz*, the necessity for the Prime Minister to be able to choose one or two Cabinet colleagues who have failed to secure election to the Lower House—can easily be met by conferring on him the right to recommend two such persons to the Governor-General as nominated members of that House. There are already four such nominated members.

Another 'defect' which has been articulated by Opposition M.Ps and by their supporters, is the sense of frustration which these members feel in being compelled to see measures which they dislike carried, and measures which they like rejected. Those of them who sat in the old State Council under the Donoughmore Constitution, and had experience of administration by Committees, feel this sense of frustration keenly, as, under the old regime, they participated in the administration, and wielded some effective influence on policy. But this 'defect' seems to be rather unsubstantial, when it is considered that Opposition members are critics and watch-dogs. They have to study and learn this function, and by doing so they are equipping themselves all the more efficiently against the time when they themselves may take over the administration. Another reason for this sense of frustration was the declaration of a former Minister that the Government was not bound to attend to the wants of the constituencies represented by Opposition members. It seems strange that the late Prime Minister, who used to declaim the word "democracy" so repeatedly, did not scotch this fallacious theory. Perhaps he had good reasons for not doing so: It is at least suggestive that, at the May, 1952, elections, this theory was loud-pedalled by the United National Party candidates, and their stooges to bully the electors into voting for them. The sense of frustration, which undoubtedly is now felt, is probably due to the fact that the same Party has, twice in succession, come into power by using every known fraudulent electoral device.

In the first General Election of 1947, for instance, there were proved cases of the breaking of bridges to prevent electors from reaching the polling stations: indecent exposure by men was used to keep women voters away: Opposition candidates' offices near the polling booths were destroyed; impersonation was practised on a mass scale. This practice has, in fact, been developed to a high pitch of organization, and there are known to be men who can supply any required number of people of both sexes, dressed up as Sinhalese, Tamil or Muslim as the case may need.

The Second General Election was fought in 1952 and the same Party was returned to power. The Opposition, both in Parliament and in public meeting assembled, as reported in the daily Press, accused the United National Party of having "substituted Ballot boxes" and of having "Ballot papers introduced" at the Polling Stations and Counting Rooms, and moreover added that for this and for other electoral purposes the services of Government officials were utilised by the Party. The political neutrality of these officials is as much an essential feature of the Ceylon machinery as it is in the United Kingdom. The Opposition contention was that at the election time (when such neutrality was most needed) it simply did not exist. Government officials were alleged to have been made to realise that their prospects depended largely on their activities in support of the Party, and to have been even persuaded to canvass for the Party's candidates. The Civil Service itself was not exempted from this charge which alleged a painful deterioration from the standard maintained under the British Colonial Administration.

During the May 1952 elections, a Government Official was to have presided at the opening of a Central School in the constituency of a Minister. The Minister himself was to have taken a part in the ceremony. One of the Opposition candidates pointed out to the official that his action represented taking part in what constitute interference in elections by Government servants. The official replied that the function was the opening of a school and all are welcome. On the day fixed for the opening ceremony the official came in person to a point where a crowd had collected to receive him and to take him in procession, and announced that the function was postponed as an objection had been raised.

The part played in these two elections by the owners of road transport concerns was important and deserves notice. At present, a few Bus Companies enjoy a virtual monopoly of this transport. It has been given to them by the Party in power, and the Opposition parties have proclaimed that, should they accede to power, they will end this monopoly by nationalisation, with or without compensation. The Bus and Lorry owners have, therefore, exerted all their efforts to maintain in power the Party on whom they depend for survival. They are the principal financial contributors to this Party; they supply free, to the Party Candidates, cars for the transport of voters. Thus the United National Party enjoyed a heavy advantage over the Opposition Parties by their obtaining facilities which were largely denied to the latter.

Such a state of affairs leads to the despairing enquiry, whether, with a political Party which cheats and bullies the voters in this manner, and with voters who allow themselves to be so treated, there is any prospect, near or distant, of genuine democratic elections in Ceylon. We have spoken highly of the prospects of men elevating their own nature in social and political affairs by means of the ballot, but unless and until both the voters and the exploiters can be changed, it would almost seem that only a violent revolution, and not the process of evolution, can render it possible for that moral elevation to be achieved.

INDICATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

As regards the abolition of the Senate, it would appear that, in terms of section 29 of the Order-in-Council which defined the Constitution, the House of Representatives is competent, by the vote of two-thirds of its members, to accomplish this abolition. Whether this view is correct, constitutional authorities must decide; but it is obviously desirable that the House should have this power. It would also seem desirable that the people of the country should be given the opportunity to decide their own future status, and make their own constitution. This has been done, in the cases of India, Burma and Pakistan, and the method chosen was the election by the people of a Constituent Assembly, which was charged with the duty of drawing up a definitive Constitution. As is well known, the three countries above mentioned have decided their own different ways.

Whatever form of constitution is evolved by a Constituent Assembly, our relations with the British Royal House will have to undergo a radical change. As far as the personal qualities of the British Royal Family are concerned, they are all admirable. But this fact does not justify the continuance of an entirely artificial link. They and the people of Ceylon differ in race, language, customs, habits, religion and modes of thought. There is between them no common interest, and no circumstances to draw them together; whereas there are innumerable forces operating to keep them apart. And, as Dr. Colvin R. de Silva remarks in *Ceylon under British Occupation*, "the politic patronage of a Christian government is hardly a satisfactory substitute for that of a Buddhist King, nor could the former take the intimate part in Buddhist rites, ceremonies and processions which the latter had naturally performed." (See page 94).

The continued alignment of Ceylon, as a Dominion, with the British Commonwealth is entirely artificial. The real basis of Dominion Status, the rock on which it rests for popular support, is racial and religious affinity (see page 148), and there is neither racial nor religious affinity between the Sinhalese and the British. If there is a desire to continue our association in the Commonwealth, we will have to follow the example of India. When she declared herself a Republic, a formula was found giving equality of Commonwealth Membership to both kingdoms and republics, which would accept the status of the King as the symbol of free associations of the member States and as such the Head of the Commonwealth, but would owe no allegiance to the Crown. (See page 155).

In olden times, as made clear in the Foreword to this work, the Head of the State was nominated by the Sangha and formally accepted by the people. It would appear now that both of these rights, that of the Sangha as well as of the people, have been insolently arrogated to themselves by the United National Party. At the Prime Ministers' conference in London, in December, 1952, when the title of Queen Elizabeth in relation to each Dominion was being discussed, it was reported that Mr. Dudley Senanayake, flourishing the Kandyan Convention in the face of Mr. Churchill said: "that Queen Elizabeth, so far as Ceylon was concerned, was first Queen of Ceylon and only incidentally Queen of the United Kingdom and the Dominions."

Mr. Churchill, the old yet astute statesman, saw no point in crossing swords with our immature yet chivalrous Prime Minister, and gladly surrendered his young and beautiful Queen to the United National Party of Ceylon—we say the United National Party, because the people of Ceylon had not given a mandate to Mr. Senanayake to nominate or accept Elizabeth as "Queen of Ceylon."

The Kandyan Convention is a disreputable episode in the history of Ceylon: It is the compact by which the feudal Chiefs surrendered the freedom of Lanka to King George III of England. The Chiefs hoped that, by that process their clan interests would be assured, but they were disillusionized not very long afterwards. The United National Party has now apparently stepped into the shoes of the Kandyan Chiefs of old, and the same disillusionment awaits them.

In May, 1956, the Sinhalese will be completing 2500 years of their existence as a nation. The question that confronts every

Sinhalese today is: Are we, on that great day, going to stand before the world as a free people, or as "lieges" of Elizabeth, Queen of Ceylon, and "incidentally" Queen of England?*

PROSPERITY AND HAPPINESS ATTAINABLE

Throughout the long ages since life began, the mechanism of evolution has involved cruel suffering, endless struggle for bare subsistence; and, in the end, in most cases, death by starvation. Now, at last, man has discovered how to prevent abject poverty, how to prevent the pain and sorrow and waste of useless births condemned to premature death, and how to substitute intelligence and care for the blind ruthlessness of Nature.

It is the conquest of Nature which has made possible a more friendly and co-operative attitude between human beings, and if rational men co-operated and used their scientific knowledge to the full, they could now secure the economic welfare of all—which was not possible in any earlier period. Life and death competition for the possession of fertile lands was inevitable enough in the past, but it has now become a folly. International co-operation, business organisation, and Birth Control should make the world comfortable for everybody.

If you ever asked yourself the direct question: "Have I politically a right to be happy, and is it the duty of the Government to see that I have the same chance as other people of being happy?" We feel pretty certain that you would answer emphatically "Yes". It is, however, a curious fact that, if you had lived at any period before the nineteenth century, unless you had happened to belong to a very small privileged class of aristocrats, you would almost certainly have answered the same question with an emphatic "No". This change—one of the most important and disturbing of all the political and social changes in history—is the result of democracy,

* The Proclamation read on the 8th February, 1952, proclaiming the Queen of England as the Queen of Ceylon, was as follows :

"Whereas by the decease of our late Sovereign Lord King George the Sixth the Crown is by our laws solely and rightfully come to the High and Mighty Princess Elizabeth Alexandra Mary:

"We, the Governor-General, the Prime Minister and the other Ministers of the Crown in Ceylon, do now hereby, with one voice and consent of tongue and heart, publish and proclaim that the High and Mighty Princess Elizabeth Alexandra Mary is now, by the death of our late Sovereign of happy memory, become our Sovereign Queen by the name and style of Elizabeth the Second, to whom her lieges do acknowledge all faith and constant obedience with hearty and humble affection."

the loss of that faith in supernatural religion which teaches that the difference between rich and poor was ordained by God, and the abandonment of Karma as a theory of Fatalism.

Once, in a nation, men take charge of their destiny, however, once society realizes its own power to plan its future and compel Nature to unlock its treasures by using scientific knowledge, once it applies scientific principles to its own self-organization, everybody could have as much of this world's goods as is necessary for the welfare of sensible people. With the problem of poverty and destitution eliminated, men could devote themselves to the constructive arts of civilization—to the progress of science, the diminution of disease, the postponement of death, and the liberation of the impulses that make for happiness.

(2) *The Roads to the Goal (Ethical)*

OUR desire to progress towards a better world will be inseparable from the urge to improve ourselves; and this self-improvement must be striven after in the spiritual and intellectual, as well as in the merely material sense. What is true of individuals is equally true of civilization at large. Progress depends not merely on more happiness and improvement of material conditions: the improvement must transcend economic, social and even intellectual boundaries. It must involve the totality of Man with his material circumstances, his knowledge and his character.

It is not without danger to tabulate human progress in terms of material improvement alone. Without a corresponding spiritual advance, the material improvements—means to an end and not an end in themselves—will soon be regarded by those benefiting from them as insufficient. The race on the material plane, with envy, competition, greed, and, finally, dissatisfaction, all assembled in the field, will not only continue but be accelerated.

External circumstances of life have been vastly altered by the applications of scientific discovery and invention, though as yet for only a minority of mankind. The improvement of man's estate by the application of scientific knowledge is one of the loftiest adventures: but a belief that it can be achieved by scientific methods alone, without a moral basis to society, is a perilous illusion. The climate of popular opinion today is very different from what it was in the early decades of this century, when the Wellsian faith that the march of science would automatically ensure a brave new world of plenty and happiness was widely held. Two World Wars, the gas

chambers of Belsen and Auschwitz, and the holocausts of Hiroshima and Nagasaki have made it impossible for any thinking person ever again to indulge in that naive belief.

Our innate constitution is not, as John Locke said, and as the optimistic philosophers of the nineteenth century believed, a *tabula rasa*, a clean wax tablet, plastic to receive and to retain whatever form and impress may be given to it. If this doctrine were true, it would follow that we need only to improve the environment in order to transform the whole human race into perfect beings. This was the false philosophy upon which the hopes and the practices of the philanthropists of the nineteenth century were mainly founded.

Human nature, the innate constitution of the species, may more truly be likened to a palimpsest, a tablet that bears the deep and ineradicable impressions of the experience of the race—impressions made during the millions of years in which the race struggled slowly and painfully upward from the intellectual and moral levels of our animal ancestry.

The ideal of Marx, of Lenin, and their fellows, the ideal of a world that should need no government, because every man and woman would obey with perfect self-suppression and perfect wisdom the dictates of the universal ethics of human brotherhood—no doubt, if this revolution could be brought about, the state of the world would be improved. But the experience of nearly two thousand five hundred years shows that this demand and this hope cannot be fulfilled. They could be fulfilled only if human nature could be radically transformed, in a manner and to a degree that we know to be impossible. Human nature, the constitution which each of us inherits, the innate endowment of the species, *Homo Sapiens*, is the product of a long, slow process of evolution; this native basis can be changed only very slowly.

The mass of mankind cannot be made into angels in the course of a few years, nor in the course of a few generations, by any natural process. We must seek to develop such an ethical and political system as will effectively harmonize, for social ends, those energies of human nature that are common to the whole race of man, those ancient instinctive energies that are the very foundation of our being, the springs of all our activities. Men need to be governed, need to be members of an organized polity, if they are to realize the best potentialities of their nature. Only by partaking in the life of an organized political community, held together by ancient, firmly rooted traditions, ethical and political, has man risen from savagery; and only by further development and improvement of

his ethical traditions and political institutions can he hope to rise above the very modest level he has so far attained.

THE "FIRE SERMON"

It is the nature of man to be in conflict with something. The contests in which men are engaged are of three kinds—they are conflicts of: (1) Men with nature: (2) Men with other men: and (3) Men with themselves.

These conflicts are very different in their character, and with the history of man their relative importance is continually changing. The methods by which the conflicts are conducted are completely different. Conflict with nature is conducted by physical science and technical skill. Conflict with man is conducted by politics and war. The inner conflict which rages in an individual being is dealt with by religion; Buddhist teaching is mainly directed to this problem: "To purify one's mind" (*sa citta pariyodapanam*) is the sum-total of the Buddha's ethical teaching.

Of these three kinds of contests, the contest with physical nature is in a sense the most fundamental, since victory in this contest is essential to survival. Every victory over physical nature makes possible an increase in the numbers of the human species and has usually been employed mainly to this end.

But in proportion as man masters his environment, his relations to his fellow men assume increasing importance, partly because the technique of mastery over nature involves social groups more coherent than those of the most primitive man, and partly because, in proportion as the winning of daily bread becomes easier, a greater amount of energy can be set aside for the killing of enemies.

There comes, however, a moment in human evolution when, owing to the growth of technique, men can become richer through agreement with previous competitors than through extermination of enemies. When this stage is reached, what may be called the demands of technique require a cessation, or at least mitigation, of the conflicts of man with man.

When this stage is reached: it is, in fact, the stage which mankind has reached at the present moment; the conflicts that most need to be resolved are the conflicts of man with himself. And what are these conflicts?

In the discourse popularly known as the "Fire Sermon" (*Ādittapariyaya Sutta* of the *Samyutta Nikaya*) the Buddha says: "Everything, O Brethren, is in conflict: And what are all these things which are in conflict?"

“The eye is in conflict ; material-forms are in conflict ; thought coming from sight is in conflict; contact through the eye is in conflict; in other words, the feeling which arises from impressions received by the eye, be it pleasant, or painful, or neither; that, too, is in conflict.

“And with what are these in conflict ?

“With the *fire* of selfish desire, say I; with the *fire* of hatred; with the *fire* of delusion; with individuality, with decay, with death, with grief, with lamentation, with sorrow, with dejection, with despair.

“The ear is in conflict; sounds are in conflict ; the nostrils are in conflict; odours are in conflict ; . . . the tongue is in conflict; tastes are in conflict ; . . . the body is in conflict; things tangible are in conflict; . . . the mind is in conflict; ideas are in conflict; . . . mind-consciousness is in conflict; contact through the mind is in conflict ; in other words, the feeling which arises from impressions received by the mind, be it pleasant, or painful, or neither; that, too, is in conflict.

“Perceiving this, O Brethren, the instructed man becomes indifferent to all the sense organs and sense impressions : and, in becoming indifferent, he becomes divested of passion, of selfish desire; and when he is divested of these he becomes free.”

The man who is not at peace with himself cannot be at peace with the world, and external wars have to continue in order to hide from individual men that the real war is within. The one prayer of mankind today is peace, but there can be no peace in this war-torn world until the conflicts of man with himself are ended. For this reason Buddhism assumes supreme importance in the modern world.

Greed and ambition place us in conflict with our fellow-men, but it is far worse to be in conflict with ourselves. There are, in each one of us, two beings : a member of society and a human being with passionate feelings—an intellect and an animal. It is very unpleasant to realize that we are a prey to self-indulgence and that we are wise men only during a part of our lives. A harmonious agreement within oneself is difficult to achieve because many of our thoughts have very different origins from the ones we like to give them. We pretend that we are talking reasonably when, with false judgment and weak arguments, we are merely working off an old grudge. We are hostile to a certain group of people because one of its members has done us some serious injury. We refuse to admit these weaknesses, but our conscience tells us

that they exist and we become dissatisfied with ourselves, we become bitter, violent, absurd, and we insult our friends because we know we are not the men we should have liked to be. Whence the importance of "Knowledge" as taught in Buddhism. (See pages 200 and 340). In order to achieve serenity, the intelligent man must first make objective all thought-distorting passions and memories.

Another cause of unhappiness is our meditating upon the past. We do not mean that meditation is unwise. Almost every important decision should be preceded by meditation ; if meditation concerns a definite object, it can do no harm. What is harmful is the endless turning over in the mind of some loss, some insult, some abuse ; in short something that cannot be remedied. "Do not cry over spilt milk," says the English proverb. Disraeli advises us never to explain and never to complain. Descartes said : "I have learned to check my desires and not to fight against the world's laws and to believe that what could not be accomplished was for me absolutely impossible." From time to time the mind must be cleansed and renewed. There is no happiness without forgetfulness. We have never known a real man of action to be unhappy during action. How could he be ? Like a child at play, he stops thinking of himself. Action itself is not enough ; one must act in harmony with the society of which one is a part. A permanent state of conflict wears one down and makes work difficult, sometimes impossible.

Choose a community to live in whose efforts lie in the same direction as your own and where there will be interest in your activities. Instead of living in conflict with your family, who in your opinion do not understand you, and in the conflict destroying your happiness and that of others, seek out friends who think as you do. If you are religious, live among believers; if you are a revolutionary, live among your own kind. You can still try to convince the sceptical, and in this you will have the support of those who are in agreement with you. It is wrongly held by many that to be happy one must have the admiration and respect of great many people ; but the esteem of one's own circle is essential. Do not make yourself unhappy by imagining distant and unpredictable tragedies. Life is difficult and our peaceful moments are few, but the future will certainly not in any way resemble your gloomy forebodings. Enjoy the present. Imitate those children sailing their white-sailed boats on the pond. Do your duty and say to yourself: "I have done my best." (See page 261).

Obviously the future must be considered in the light of one's own power to influence events. The man of action cannot be a fatalist. The architect has to think of the future of the house he is building; a workman has to take measures for safeguarding his old age; a member of the Parliament has to consider the possible effects of the budget for which he is going to vote. But once decisions are made and measures taken, peace of mind must be re-established. It is absurd to try to foresee things when the means of doing it are lacking.

When one is already happy it is important not to lose the virtues which have produced happiness. When they are successful, many men and women forget prudence, moderation, gratitude and kindness—qualities which were instrumental in their success. They are arrogant or thoughtless; an excessive self-confidence prevents them from accomplishing difficult tasks, and they soon become unworthy of their good fortune. They are surprised when their luck changes from good to bad. The ancient practice of sacrifice to the gods in return for happiness was a wise one. Polycrates, Tyrant of Samos, threw his precious ring into the sea as a sacrifice, and there are several ways of throwing the ring of Polycrates into the sea. The simplest is to be modest—the Buddha brought this to the concrete sphere when He advised the Brahmin Kūṭadanta to throw his Ego into the sacrificial fire. (See page 181).

These recipes for happiness have been taught ever since the existence of philosophers who thought out the universal ethics, who meditated and advised moderate desires and a life in harmony with oneself. This is the philosophy of the Buddha; it is also that of the wise men of our own time.

Man is by nature more a slave of himself, his own mind, than its master. Keeping the Self in subjection is the central theme of Buddhism (see page 201). As Moggallāna once explained to Sāriputta, one must have the self under control (*cittam vasam vatteti*), and not allow the Self to dominate one's self (*cittassa vasena vattati*). Buddhist psychology, unlike for instance the Freudian system, maintains that man can restrain, curb and subdue his self by his own self (*cetassa cittam abhiniggaṇhati*), and thus check and eliminate evil propensities by himself, without, necessarily, going to an analyst. The Will in Buddhism, though an aspect of the mind, can yet act as the controller of the mind, both in the conscious and the unconscious spheres. This is possible because, as the *Anguttara Nikāya* says, the mind if cultivated is the most pliable (*kammaniya*) thing to handle. By "cultivated" (*bhāvita*) is here meant the

process of mental culture which is called *bhāvanā* in Buddhism. Such a process is feasible because Buddhism holds that causation is as true of the mind as of external things.

While we were slaves to Nature we could allow ourselves a slave mentality, and leave to Nature decisions which now must be ours. Traditional religion and morality were inspired by man's bondage to Nature, and the ways of thought and feeling that we acquire from our culture and from our early upbringing are hard to overcome, even when circumstances imperatively demand a different outlook.

Buddhism is the *only* religion which attempts to achieve an internal harmony by a scientific, and deliberately planned process. Traditional religion says man is in conflict with God, his Maker: but Buddhism says, it is not so, man is in conflict with himself; and until this conflict is turned into a harmony, there cannot be peace either within or without. If men prove incapable of achieving this harmony, the whole movement of science and scientific technique will have proved a misfortune, and perhaps will have taken man along a blind alley.

For these reasons the war of man with himself is that which at the end of human evolution assumes great consequence. Each kind of war should end in harmony. (See page 346).

The conflict of man with physical nature is turned into a harmony in proportion as man learns the secrets of Nature, and thereby becomes able to co-operate with her. The conflict of man with man serves a purpose so long as there is no possibility of adequate food supply for all. But when the conquest of Nature has secured the possibility of adequate food supply for all, and when the growth of technique has made large-scale co-operation profitable, the conflict of man with man becomes an anachronism, and should culminate in the Brotherhood of Man, and in the political and economic unification of the world. By this means, an external harmony of man with man can be established, but it will not be a genuine harmony until men have achieved a genuine harmony within themselves.

SELF-MASTERY ESSENTIAL

The three fundamental principles underlying all Buddhist thought are the three doctrines of (1) *Aniccam*, (2) *Dukkham*, and (3) *Anattam*, that is to say:

- (1) In man is no abiding Entity
- (2) Sorrow is inherent in Individuality
- (3) In things no abiding Reality.

The code of morality and the planned course of inward culture and development set for the follower is the Eightfold Path, consisting of: (1) Right views, (2) Noble aims, (3) Right speech, (4) Integrity of conduct, (5) A harmless livelihood, (6) Perseverance in good, (7) Intellectual activity, and (8) Earnest thought.

Mastery over self is the primary concern of the Buddhist code of morality. Mastery over material things will avail us nothing if we lose mastery over ourselves. Morality involves the correct and careful regulation of two relationships: man to himself and man to his fellow men. This code of morality sets a clear, positive and complete pattern of right living. It gives an integrity of action to daily life. Such a life will not have its "*Poya* days", in which the Code is respected and its "other days" in which it is ignored.

Rather, all aspects of life will be so integrated that the standard to which a man subscribes in his private life will be logically extended to his life in the community. Then, if faithful to moral principles as an individual, he will be faithful to moral principles as a citizen, and in all his actions as a member of society.

The three guiding moral principles which should motivate his relations to society are: (1) Renunciation of Greed. (2) Extinction of Hatred. (3) Liquidation of Ignorance. Buddhism is a religion of conduct and not of ritual or worship. Neither ritual nor worship is the essence of an ethical system. The future of Buddhism is not determined by the retention of forms of worship or by an unbroken tradition of creed. The determining factor is the degree in which the guiding principles are realised in conduct.

If it is asked whether the Sinhalese are evidently and unmistakably influenced in their lives by the religion they profess, the answer must be "No"; except in the matter of attendance at temples to offer flowers and in the matter of scrupulosity about taking the life of animals. In other matters, whether a man's conduct were good or bad, he would seldom allege religion as his motive. Religion is a matter of obtaining merit by certain offerings and attendances; not, in ordinary cases, a matter of conduct. Instances there are, where wealth is lavished on a large scale; on the building of religious edifices, illumination of temples with 84,000 lamps, feeding of 1000 bhikkhus etc.; but of conduct, properly so called, founded on religious principle, there is hardly any. The most lamentable feature in this state of affairs is the encouragement given, and the active part the Sangha themselves take, in these exhibitions. All very distressing; but not strange, when we attribute these manifestations to the want of exemplary characters

rather than to the absence of any idea that a man's religion is to be tested by his conduct in ordinary life.

If practice of Buddhism makes no improvement in a man's outward actions—if he continues to be just as greedy or spiteful or envious or impulsive as he was before—if he cheats those who work for him, or robs his Co-operative Society, or misappropriates Village Committee funds—if he shows no compassion for a suffering fellow-being, or at the slightest provocation plunges a knife into the bosom of another—then we think we must suspect that his "practice" is largely illusory. Fine feelings, new insights, greater interest in 'religion' mean nothing unless they make our actual behaviour better; just as in an illness 'feeling better' isn't much good if the thermometer shows that your temperature is still going up. In that sense the outer world is quite right to judge Buddhism by its results. A tree is known by its fruit; or, as we say, the proof of the pudding is in the eating.

It is only too common to find respectable men, with influence in their own local community, who would in no circumstances commit the least irregularity in regard to temple property, but would without scruple rob, on a large-scale, Village Committees, Co-operative Societies, and similar public organisations. In the one case, a man recognises that what he and others have given to the Sangha has become sacred—it is *Sāṅghika*, the property of the community—whether it be a thousand acres of land or a dish of rice. As he makes this gift, he dedicates it by the repetition of the Pali formula: "I give this to the community of bhikkhus", and thereafter he not only has relinquished all claims of his own to it, but is bound to safeguard it as the sacred property of the Sangha. We have here a highly developed sense of "community property". But that sense is simply non-existent when the man contemplates the other sort of community property such as public funds: though these should be just as or more sacred, for they are community property in origin itself, and are not made so by the recitation of a formula. This drastic contradiction does not seem to be capable of explanation, except on the supposition that the Sangha has carefully and insistently instilled into the lay mind the absolute sanctity of the *Sāṅghika* property, but has refrained from any such pronouncement in regard to public property.

RELIGION AND THE SOCIAL LIFE TODAY

How far the religion as it is practised today has, or has not, remained Buddhist, must be judged by considering whether it has

attempted to carry out the same aim which was in the mind of its Founder or whether it has lost sight of that purpose. The intention of the Buddha stands out clearly enough in His first discourse to the five disciples: "If ye walk according to My teaching, ye shall, even in this present life, be partakers in a short time of that supreme happiness, the highest aspiration of religious effort." This is not an isolated statement. The same strain rings through most of His other discourses. His purpose is to teach men how to live, what must be their guiding principles, and their line of conduct, if they wish to live at peace with themselves, and therefore with their world.

The "supreme happiness" which the Buddha preached is Nirvana, the Mental Tranquillity or peace of mind to which we attain when the "conflicts" or "fires" raging within us are resolved and internal harmony is achieved. It is happiness of the highest order, accompanied too by the consciousness of the destruction of individualistic desire or selfhood. With the understanding of the transience of the individual self, there comes a sense of reconciliation and unity, and the due subordination of the unstable to the stable, of the individual to the Whole.

The distinctive note of the teaching of the Buddha is His insistence that sorrow is inherent in individuality, and therefore we must strive for the ideal of human brotherhood: we must try to treat all people alike—whatever their looks, intelligence, colour, smell, education etc. Brotherhood neither rests on blood-ties, nor is concerned with political or religious ties. That dynamic force in human nature which requires friendship and which, once released, will strive for brotherhood, cuts right through family, class, race and sectarian allegiance.

According to Buddhist teaching, man is a composite of five *skandhas* or aggregates. They are: the Body (*rūpa*), Feelings and Sensations (*vedanā*), Perceptions (*saññā*), Mental Tendencies (*sankhārā*), and Acts of Consciousness (*viññāna*). Anything a person may grasp at, or lean on, or appropriate, must fall within one of these five groups, which make up the composition of 'individuality'. The belief in individuality arises from the imagination of a 'self' over and above those five aggregates. The belief expresses itself in the assumption that any of this is 'mine' or that 'I am' any of this, or that any of this 'is myself'. Or, in other words, in the belief that 'I am this' or that 'I have this' or that 'this is mine', or that 'I am in this'.

The specific contribution of Buddhism to religious thought lies in its insistence on the doctrine of *an-atta* (no-self). The belief in a

'self', or a 'soul' is an indispensable condition to the emergence of suffering. We conjure up such ideas as 'I' and 'mine' and many most undesirable states result. Therefore, we are urged to struggle against the intellectual conviction that there is such a thing as a 'self', or a 'soul', or a 'substance', or such relations as 'belonging' or 'owning'. The fact of individuality disappears with the belief in it, since it is no more than a gratuitous assumption. When the individual achieves de-individualisation, he attains Nirvana.

The road to the goal is through the three rules of conduct of *Paññā* or Knowledge, *Sīla* or Moral Conduct and *Samādhi* or Self-discipline. Whether we consider that the end of conduct is the attainment of truth, or regard the knowledge of truth as the foundation of conduct, either way the two are bound up with each other. But it is conspicuously true in the case of the Buddhist system. Not only did the Buddha base His rules on His Four Noble Truths, but knowledge itself, in the Buddhist view, is a virtue. The very name, 'Buddhism', of a system which is pre-eminently a system of conduct, is derived from '*budh*', to know. The two concepts are also linked together by another characteristic feature of Buddhism, the emphasis which it lays on meditation. Meditation, by which knowledge is brought to bear on conduct, is in fact a part of conduct. Conversely, meditation, by which truth is arrived at, depends upon the essentially moral conditions of purity and self-discipline.

Not only the senses but also the body must be brought, by prolonged practices, under control by self-culture and self-control, to become like a musical instrument, able to vibrate to the hidden impulses that govern the breath of the universe. Our intellectual faculties must be purified by progressive renunciation of all false aspirations until it attains awareness of a life beyond forms and ideas; and our subconscious mind must undergo a prolonged education, until the thinking individual, by gradually divesting himself of slavery to material things, is able really to detach himself from his world of fleeting individual desires and to merge his self in the universal order.

To practise this system one need not abandon the world. A philosophy of running away from the duties of life is hardly of any use to the modern world, where every man and woman has to work to earn his daily bread. We are indeed destined to suffer, and the more we try to insulate ourselves against suffering the more we shall suffer. One of the wisest yet humblest men who ever lived, Thomas á Kempis, wrote this: "So long as suffering appears grievous to thee and thou seekest to fly from it,

so long will it be ill with thee and the tribulation from which thou fliest will everywhere follow thee.”

The original pure Buddhist ideal demanded the subordination of the individual—that is, of his desires, his thoughts, his endeavours—to the welfare of his fellows. The Theravada system fell away from this lofty and unselfish conception. It placed the emphasis on the salvation of oneself by renunciation of the world, by concentrated meditation on the problem of personal salvation. (pp. 579-585). It was religion turned inwards, and it was anti-social, and it had all the ill-effects that anti-social thought and conduct must produce. Gibbon put the Christian religion and the barbarian invasions high among the causes that were destructive of Rome (see page 526). We may observe a certain parallel in considering the reasons for the breakdown of the Buddhist civilizations in India and Ceylon. In the former case, there were the Muslim invasions, and in the latter, successive waves of foreign invasion. As to the religious aspect of the breakdown which Gibbon notices in the case of Rome, it may be said in regard to India and Ceylon, that the rise and progress of the Theravada system of Buddhism was a major contributory cause of the deterioration of civilization in these two countries.

SANCTIONS : SOCIAL RATHER THAN RELIGIOUS

Today, in the life of the Buddhist community, the practical aspects of the religion do not go much further than the ritual of “giving” and “taking” of the ‘Five Precepts’; the parrot-like repetition of the Pali formula :

1. To abstain from destroying life.
2. To abstain from stealing.
3. To abstain from adultery.
4. To abstain from falsehood.
5. To abstain from intoxicants.

These Five Precepts are not original to Buddhism. They are not among the discoveries made on the day of Enlightenment, nor are they mentioned in the first discourses. They never occur in any discourse which bears marks of being more than conventionally an utterance of the Buddha Himself. Nor is the number five constantly adhered to, for in many cases, perhaps in a majority, the fifth prohibition is omitted. In the more exhaustive Suttas, such as the *Tevijja Sutta*, they are stated under the heading of “Little

Rules of Conduct'', but even in these the fifth prohibition is sometimes omitted. To the simple society that existed two thousand five hundred years ago in northern India, these negative virtues or 'externally imposed don'ts' based on the religious sanctions of the Brahmins, were found to be quite sufficient, and the Buddhist system also adopted them.

What gives force to moral principles is the four historic 'sanctions'—those of Nature, Law, Society and Religion. From each of these sources the average individual has learned to expect the punishment of evil consequences, should he break certain moral principles. The most important of these is the social sanction. The legal sanction is not nearly so far-reaching; while the religious sanction, for most people, is weak, especially with those who do not take religion seriously and are little, if at all, influenced by apprehension of divine punishment. But the fear of social disapproval, humiliation or ostracism, is one that neither the most careless nor the boldest can ignore. Most people will endure or risk the infliction of many of Nature's penalties rather than bring upon themselves these social pains; while the dubious and far-off threatenings of religion are usually weak in comparison.

The weakness of the religious sanction and the powerful effect of social humiliation, have been vividly brought home to us by two very recent events, one in England, the other in Ceylon. That influential British paper, the *Church Times*, commenting on Mr. Anthony Eden's remarriage after divorce, said: "It is now apparently to be accepted as a matter of course that those who occupy the highest positions in political and public life may break the Church's laws without embarrassment or reproach". On the other hand, a man holding a high position in public life in Ceylon has just been compelled to relinquish it, because he was threatened with the social catastrophe which would have followed the exposure, in the public press, of his conduct in transgressing the third of the Five Precepts. Thus the social sanction triumphed when the religious sanction failed.

In the history of every community a time comes when radical changes in the religious sanctions and social order are obligatory, if the community is to exist as a living force, and continue to progress. If it is unable to make the effort, if its strength is spent and its virility exhausted, it will pass out of the stage of history. Today we will be acting in the spirit of the Buddha's exhortation if those keen on preserving His ideals, bring about radical changes in our social organisation.

Engels, and also some non-communist thinkers, such as W. K. Clifford, saw that evolution cleared up many more important problems than that of the egg and the chicken. For example, people still speak of eternal values, or eternal laws of morality. There is nothing eternal about the prohibition of stealing. Less than a million years ago our ancestors had nothing which could be called property. They did not store food, use tools, or wear clothes. In the remote future there may be no private property, either because all useful things will be made in such quantities that we shall no more want them for private use than we now want air or sunlight, or because the feeling of human brotherhood will be so strong that we shall take common ownership of everything as a matter of course.

If we believe in moral progress, we must surely believe that our present moral standards will be superseded. We feel today that slavery is unjust, yet saintly men a few hundred years ago thought it perfectly just, and felt it was immoral to suggest that the legal rights of masters should be overset. So we should remember that some of the things we consider perfectly just today, because they are sanctified by religion, law and custom, will certainly be looked back upon by our grandchildren as monstrous injustices. Perhaps our hiring of human labour to work for profit in plantations and factories will seem to them as slavery does to us.

Moral progress must often look like moral degeneration to rigid and orthodox good people. A breaking away from current standards may be evidence of moral collapse, but it may equally be evidence of moral advance. The Brahmins considered the Buddha a revolutionary, good orthodox Athenians thought that Socrates was corrupting their youngsters, and we have no doubt that law-abiding Pharisees thought Jesus was a bad man.

That is why we must get back to those moral qualities like kindness, courage, sincerity and justice, which always have been recognised as the real core of human goodness. We feel sure that the further moral progress goes, the simpler our moral standards will become. The bondage of the law will give place to the freedom of the mind.

Deep down in our hearts there is a feeling that people who are moral because God established certain lines of conduct as moral, and flanked them with promises of happiness and threats of punishment, are only superficially moral. We despise them as we despise men who obey the civil law merely because they are afraid of its penalties. If moral action is not spontaneous and free from either

the hope of reward or the fear of retribution, we despise it. The modern standpoint was very well expressed by W. K. Clifford: "The first principle of natural ethics is the sole and supreme allegiance of conscience to the community." This allegiance, however, is not the blind and unquestioning allegiance which was required by the Ten Commandments. It is an intelligent allegiance, because it demands a study of what the highest interests of the community really are.

In the "Lakkhana Sutta" of the *Digha Nikaya*, the Buddha gives the attributes of the Superman or the ideal man, the man who does the right thing for right's sake:

With heart intent on speaking truth,
On righteous ways and self-restraint,
With senses curbed and conduct pure:
On virtue's hearth and holy feast,
With open hand and gentle life,
Harming no creature, shunning force
By fourfold act and exercise :
By liberal hand, by conduct wise,
By kindly speech, by just intent,
Winning and healing many hearts :
Holding such parts in honour high,
He leads a life of worth and bliss.
Not idle talk nor foolishness
Framed by confused thought is his,
Things mischievous he spurns :
For all men's good and weal he speaks,
Wrong livelihood he lays aside,
And shapes a course just, pure and right,
Then, free from evil, lusts all quenched,
For all men's good and weal he works.

The ideal state of man, as Nietzsche conceived it, is also that of the Superman. The superman, according to him, is perfectly sincere: he is what he appears to be, and appears as he is. He is perfectly natural; his life is autonomous and spontaneous. He does the right thing spontaneously, not because of any commands dictated to him by others; and he abstains from what is wrong simply because he is wholly occupied with doing what is right, and not in obedience to any externally imposed "Don't". With the ordinary man it is different. He is largely, if not wholly, dependent on the opinion

and example of others. He respects, or professes to respect, externally prescribed norms, and is especially haunted by externally imposed prohibitions.

At the same time, it cannot be said too emphatically that Nietzsche explicitly recognised the need of externally imposed codes of conduct for ordinary mortals, although he maintained that it was far wiser to dwell on what should be done than on what should be left undone. "In the main", he wrote, "all those moral systems are distasteful to me which say: 'Do not do this! Renounce! Overcome thyself': On the other hand, I am in favour of those moral systems which stimulate me to do something, to do it again from morn till eve, and dream of it at night, and think of nothing else but how to do it *well*, as well as it is possible for me alone! From him who so lives there fall away one after another the things that do not pertain to his life. Without hatred or antipathy he sees this leave him today, and that tomorrow. . . . Or he does not see at all that they leave him—so firmly is his eye fixed on his goal, forward, not sideways, or backward, or downward. What we do must determine what we leave undone; in that we do some things we leave others undone. . . . But I do not mean to strive deliberately for my impoverishment: I do not like any of the negative virtues whose essence is negation and self-renunciation!" (*Joyful Wisdom*).

As opposed to the negative Five Precepts, the Buddha's ten positive moral principles based on social sanctions, embodying the *Dasa Paramitas* or the Ten 'Virtues' or 'Perfections' of 1. *Dāna* (Generosity), 2. *Sīla* (Morality), 3. *Nekkhamma* (Renunciation), 4. *Pañña* (Wisdom), 5. *Viriya* (Energy), 6. *Khānti* (Patience), 7. *Sacca* (Truthfulness), 8. *Adhitthana* (Determination), 9. *Metta* (Loving-kindness), 10. *Upekkha* (Equanimity), are far more suitable for the complex society of our day.

In their application to life they may be rendered as follows in conformity with the Buddha's teaching:—

1. May I be generous and conscious of a common purpose with others and express solidarity with them.
2. May I be always conscious that the ugliness I see in others is a reflection of my own self ; and refrain from thinking or speaking ill of others.
3. May I be unselfish and free of the delusion that individual advancement is achieved by crushing others down.
4. May I be diligent in the search for truth, and may I keep my vision clear to see the goal.

5. May I be energetic and think what action a situation calls for, and not dwell on how unfortunate it is.
6. May I be patient, cheerful, and enthusiastic, and may both consideration for others and for the future influence my behaviour.
7. May I detect dishonesty, envy, intolerance, and self-pity in any disguise, and banish them from my thinking.
8. May I be stimulated to face whatever opportunities and difficulties life brings, and take satisfaction in meeting them with my best efforts.
9. May I be always conscious that every person I meet during the day is a dignified personality of the human family and is made of the same component things as myself, and may I strive for the ideal of brotherhood through love of people and service to others.
10. May any resentment spur me to constructive thinking and acting, and may I avoid outbursts of temper and the harbouring of resentment.

Certain principles of conduct have already been extracted from the age-long experience of the race; but their application to particular conditions still demands an effort of thought. Morality continues to evolve, and each generation must solve its moral problems in its own way. But amid this continual change there is one thing which remains rigid—the operation of the law of cause and effect.

A RELIGIOUS REVIVAL

The Buddha can never have envisaged the worship of His image. But, being incurably religious, Man must have something to worship. "There is in Man's nature an itch for worship", says Father Knox, "an instinct for religion, but what sort of religion? Why should not Buddhism, for example, satisfy the craving?" He asks! The answer to the first question is, surely, one that is rational and not contradictory to science. And to the second that for millions it does.

At first His followers represented the Buddha in symbols (see page 50), but soon afterwards the symbols were replaced by images, and the Buddhists began to perform devotional practices before the images. This would satisfy the human "itch for worship", and the need for a 'saviour' to whom one could appeal in person, and for a 'divinity' that one could see and touch.

There is no doubt of the previous existence of a prohibition of the representations of the Buddha in any way but by symbol, and a few Gandhara pieces of this sort are known. It remained for the early sculptors of Gandhara to do much original work in the creation of expressions of the Buddha as a superhuman being. Gandharan Art seems to have been an original and courageous effort to bring the concept of the Buddha and His teaching of Cosmic Law out of the realm of abstraction and to give it material form.

Unless a principle of through-going iconoclasm is adopted, as in the case of Islam, the common people, the great mass of believers, if not the philosophers, require their divinity to have a form. The choice and adoption of that form by a civilization is a process of incalculable consequence.

The contemplative Buddha image speaks for a whole vision of life: it recalls the cosmic drama on which the East has been nurtured for 2500 years—the drama of myriads of beings who, passing through the cycle of birth and rebirth, travelling down the tormented and troublesome river of life and death, turn their steps, first doubtfully and hesitantly, groping in the dark, and then consciously and deliberately in the direction of Enlightenment, the state of Buddhahood. It stands for the state of harmony, or “in tune” with the Infinite, the Cosmic Force the *Amata*, the Deathless or the Unborn (*Ajātam*), the origin of the whole universe of beauty and right impulse. (See pages 283 and 398).^{*} The Buddha image is primarily a symbol, something that fills a place with serenity, as the presence of a loved person spiritually illumines a house.

^{*} To those who scan the heavens and are awed by the majesty and the dark immensity of space, truth is only optical. They fail to see what the great Sages of old saw by a deeper vision, enveloping, and controlling all this immensity: the Cosmic Force, the *Amata*, the Deathless; the *Agatam*, the Unborn, which govern all phenomena, and which is summed up thus in the *Bṛihad-aranyaka Upanishad*: “He who, dwelling in the mind, is other than the mind whom the mind knows not, whose body the mind is, who inwardly rules the mind, is thyself, the Inward Ruler, the Deathless. Again, *The Bhagavad-gita* says: “From Me the Unborn, the Beginningless, alone arise of being the manifold states of mind: power of decision, judgment, knowledge, purity of spirit, capacity to endure, true insight, discipline, serenity, pleasure and pain, well-being and distress, fear and reliance, compassion, equanimity, contentment, self-control, doing good, glory and infamy. . . . I am the source of all, from Me everything arises.” Sir Claude Sherrington in his classic *Man on his Nature*, describing the seemingly intelligent purposiveness of the circulating blood rushing to heal a wound or give nourishment to a gland, says, “it is all understandable chemistry.” Carried a stage further it may be described as “all understandable physics.” And all this physics started from a common source the “nucleogenesis” from which the universe started its present career about 3000 million years ago.

Most religions provide not only for individual devotional practice but also for corporate worship. Corporate worship arises from the desire to express community. The congregation becomes the unit. This type of religious manifestation is felt to be so general a need that it appears even where religious observance has been formally repudiated. Thus, in Soviet Russia, the demonstrations on May Day in the Red Square are a form of public devotion not very dissimilar to Vesak Day celebrations in Buddhist countries. They supply an emotional stimulus, because a great concourse of men and women are drawn together for a common purpose, and find through that observance that their sense of unity and their devotion to a common cause are invigorated.

Corporate worship involves the use of symbol. Even where the religion is least ornate, some degree of ceremonial is introduced and emblems are employed. The value of a symbol depends entirely upon the purpose which it represents. If the religious form has ceased to be the channel of a conscious intention, it has become useless. Once the symbol and the ritual become more important than the truth which they profess to signify, once religious observance is regarded as an obligation rather than a spontaneous act or a means of stimulating devotion, it has lost its vitality.

Accordingly, there is little purpose in asking whether the religion of the new age will use the traditional forms of worship, or develop new forms, or attempt to dispense with forms. The relevant question is: What will be the intention of the new religion? Its forms are a secondary consideration.

We have envisaged this religious revival as a synthesis, as the growth of a unity of belief through action for a common purpose on the part both of Buddhist traditionalists and of progressive humanists. If so, it will be an expression which relies upon, and is itself the fruit of experience. Our supposition is that, once the foundations of the ideal of human brotherhood have been laid, a new vista of religious possibilities is opened up. We are confident that this development will occur, if at all, not by a deliberate method but through experience.

One consequence of this process is that the religious expression of the future is likely to take a liberal estimate of the virtues in the religious treasury which it regards as most precious. The Catholic tradition, on account of its authoritarian approach, has tended to canonize the quality of orthodox obedience, with the result that many of its Saints, though unimpeachably faithful to the creed, betrayed symptoms of intolerance and other palpable defects

their character. Evangelicalism has tended exclusively to emphasize the value of piety. But in the calendar of the future religion, men and women are likely to be honoured for other qualities, for service, for love, for achievements in the scientific and artistic fields, for wise leadership in political life. Piety is not the only virtue. The type of personality which intensive religion has produced, and indeed attracted, has been a lopsided development. And this distortion has been largely due to the departmentalization of religion, to the dualist theory that religion is concerned with a particular side of life and not with what have been regarded as the secular activities (see page 596).

If the religious revival is to be a genuine expression of the aspirations of the coming generation, if it is to be the force which can pour into the minds and hearts of young men and women the energy which will be required of them, it must capture a wider conception than has been attained by existing religions. We must cease to identify religion with ascetism or pietism. We must know it as embracing all the avenues of experience, we must recognize that the scientist, the physician, the artist, the politician, the industrial worker has as much place in the pantheon of saint-hood—because their tasks are essentially religious—as the bhikkhu, priest or prophet.

Modern thought has begun to recognize that the most developed type of personality is the properly integrated man. We have to aim at effecting such poise in the individual that his intellectual, emotional and physical properties are each of them fully developed in comparison with one another, that no part of his nature is unrelated to the rest. The man who is so perfectly balanced that he is himself a unity is the truly religious man: much more the religious man than the fanatic or the ascetic.

A SENSE OF FUTILITY IS UNWORTHY

Many of us face the period ahead haunted by a sense of futility. What is the use, we ask, of thinking of a better future or planning our individual lives if the complicated machinery of our civilization is headed for the scrap heap? Or, if death ends all, why all this fuss about religion: let us contrive, as best we can, our own personal security and happiness.

This is an age of cynicism about life and, inevitably, about death and what—if anything—follows it. "Our ancestors," observes Walter Lippmann, "thought they knew their way from

birth through eternity; we are puzzled about the day after tomorrow." A hundred Bertrand Russells cry: "Brief and powerless is man's life. On him and all his race the sure, slow doom falls pitiless and dark." A hundred Clarence Darrows tell us that "we are like a body of shipwrecked sailors clutching to a raft and desperately engaged in holding on... drifting, side by side, to our common doom."

One understands the cause of so much fretfulness, and so much revolt against the ideals of past ages and the old rigid moralities. "If there is no future life," say the younger modernists, "let us get all we can here and now, by any kind of means. If death ends all, why burden this short life by the hard rigours of self-control? If the mind of man is but an expression of animal behaviourism, what is the purpose of self-discipline? If there is no higher interpretation of life—this grim illusion—let us desert our wives if we have tired of them; let us do away with the old and infirm to save worry and expense; let us grab what we can for ourselves and have a good time somehow, careless of others; because tomorrow we die and all is done."

Such ideas are at work in the world today. They are being put to the test—and not with much success or happiness, as we may see by looking round upon this universal mess. They are more dangerous than war itself; because they will lead to an anarchy which is worse than war, and will disintegrate society as effectively as atom bombs, and with the aid of them. For nations, as well as individuals holding that view of life, will not be careful of morality nor of compassion nor of any ideal beyond self-interest. They will try to grab what they want while the grabbing is good.

The essential truths which the Buddha propounded were the belief in a future life and that men have an infinite duty to themselves and to their fellow-beings. Would faith in these doctrines really be shattered because Karl Marx said that death ends all? The answer to questions like this, whether there is a future life, cannot be a matter of proof. It must be a matter of faith. For if a life beyond the grave could be proved by anything which happens in the world of phenomena, there would be no room for faith. Did not Lessing utter an evident truth when he said: "The ultimate verities can neither be proved nor disproved by anything which happens in the world of phenomena?"

We are thus led to conclude that when we come to ultimate verities, to ask what they are, the best we can do is to decide on an answer, and then to act on it. From its nature a genuine faith

cannot be proved. The important thing is to act on an answer when we have made it. The test of faith is in works.

Some knowledge we have; enough to discern the alternative faiths, and to guide us in choosing between them. We all know we exist and are conscious of our own personalities. From our senses, sight, hearing, and touch, we each infer that in the bodies of others are personalities akin to our own. Each is aware of a moral sense, of some instinct which tells him that whether he does right or wrong is a matter of infinite importance. While each desires to please himself, he constantly feels that he ought to do something else in the interests of others. And this, in fact, is the supreme question, the answer to which is the ultimate verity. Is this instinct valid or not?

The materialist answers that this distinction between right and wrong has no validity and that matter, desire, our own sense of pleasure, are the final realities. The idea of virtue is a figment. To this Aristotle replied that "without virtue man is merely the most dangerous of the animals". It is not intelligence so much as this moral sense that distinguishes men from the brutes. The ethical man asserts its validity; the materialist denies it; but neither can prove his assertion or denial; yet each must sooner or later decide upon which of these two possible faiths he will act.

This test of action does not leave us at the mercy of guesswork. If the instinct which tells us to regard the good of others as indispensable to our own is illusion, and were felt to be such by all, then the stronger must dominate the weaker, till, in the end, all men have perished from the earth. On the materialist basis no human society is possible.

On the other hand, in so far as each can identify the good of others with his own, an ordered society develops in which men enjoy happiness to an ever-increasing degree.

The materialist creed is aptly stated in the words: "Let us grab what we can for ourselves and have a good time somehow, careless of others; because tomorrow we die and all is done". Should I so lead my life, and then find that this view is wrong, I have made the greatest of all mistakes. Should I live and die in the faith that to seek the good of others is to attain my own, and should this prove to be wrong, then my mistake has no lasting result and is not serious. When I have ceased to exist, the pleasures I have missed will have ceased to matter.

Man is always asking himself what is the purpose of human life, and is anxious to discover some extraneous purpose to which he and

humanity may conform. Some find such a purpose exhibited directly in revealed religion; others think that they can uncover it from the facts of Nature. Christian Scientists point to evolution as manifesting such a purpose. The history of life, it is asserted, manifests guidance on the part of some external power; and the usual deduction is that we can safely trust that same power for further guidance in the future.

Julian Huxley believes this reasoning to be wholly false. The purpose manifested in evolution, whether in adaptation, specialization, or biological progress, according to Huxley, is only an apparent purpose. It is as much a product of blind forces as in the falling of a stone to earth or the ebb and flow of the tides. It is we who have read purpose into evolution, as earlier men projected will and emotion into inorganic phenomena like storm or earthquake. If we wish to work towards a purpose for the future of man, we must formulate that purpose ourselves. Purposes in life are made, not found.

Obviously the formulation of an agreed purpose for man as a whole will not be easy. The best thing we can do with such a question is to look the problem straight in the face. It is obviously bound up with the question of the meaning of life, and the problem of the destiny of man. The views on the nature and destiny of man, or the meaning of human existence, fall roughly into two classes. According to some, man is a product of the earth: the earth is his home. His task is to make himself at home on the earth. Self-development by way of reaching the highest possible level of welfare and usefulness on earth is the highest law, and even duty, of man. Others, however, believe that man is a spirit ill at ease, a soul fallen from heaven, a stranger on this earth. His task is to regain the state of perfection which was his before he fell into this world. Self-immolation by way of apprenticeship to heaven is the highest law and duty of man. Buddhism and our modern civilization favour the first view-point, Christianity the second. Another struggle we are experiencing today is between two opposed ideals—that of the subordination of the individual to the community, and that of his intrinsic superiority. Until such major conflicts are resolved, humanity can have no single purpose, and progress can be but fitful and slow. Before progress can begin to be rapid, man must cease being afraid of his uniqueness, and must not continue to put off the responsibilities that are really his on to the shoulders of mythical gods or metaphysical absolutes.

If men believe that this present earth is the only heaven, they will try all the more to make a heaven of it.

The future of man, if it is to be progress and not merely a stand-still or a degeneration, must be guided by a deliberate purpose. So many of us today are searching for a pattern of life that will be self-satisfying, and free of the gnawing fear that we are frittering away our days on empty nothingness. But the words, "Let all live as they would die," by the English poet, George Herbert, help us overcome such fears.

The name we leave behind us is the accumulation of all the big and little things we have done during our lifetime. If we would die great, everything we do, down to the very smallest detail, must also be great. Recent world events have taught us that, if a brave new world is to arise from the shambles left by the war, individuals as well as nations must learn to live in harmony with each other, and feel morally responsible for contributing some good to the community around them. Each of us has something different to contribute, and no matter how small or insignificant it may seem, it can be for the benefit of all. If we follow this precept constantly, we can be sure that when death comes we will be fully satisfied with the way we have lived.

Rūpam jīrati maccānaṃ namagottaṃ na jīrati

"Man's body dies, but his influence lives for ever"

(Samyutta Nikaya)

Here ends the *Rajjan ca Paja ca*, or "Man and the State."

ENVOI

“ Behold now, O Brethren, I say to you, all composite things are subject to decay ; press forward untiringly to perfection.”

—The BUDDHA'S farewell message,
(*Mahaparinibbana Sutta*).

WE have now travelled a long way from the picture with which we started; of a land whose civilization began twenty-five centuries ago and which was endowed with all gifts which Nature could bestow, of a land that has enriched and is enriching thousands of investors from abroad, of a land whose Tea fills one in four of “the cup that cheers” in every country, the Rubber which gives multifarious conveniences to civilization, and Coconuts which give sustenance and health to so many millions throughout the world, of a land whose Pearls and Precious Stones give adornment to so many women upon earth. But it is, however, inhabited by a population living in unhappiness—a yet unredeemed miserable condition after twenty-five centuries of development.

The picture also tells of a land, blessed by the Buddha Himself and gifted with a doctrine which regards harm to any creature as sin, though inhabited by a population dubbed, “the third most criminal race in the world,” which is a sad commentary on the “blessings” of twenty centuries of Buddhism.

Never, perhaps, have we more sorely needed change than now. Before the First Great War men were building Utopias. Since then, disillusionment came with the depression, cynicism set in, and the new spirit of aggression so bewildered us all, that men almost gave up solving the problem of happiness, which depends on harmony, organization, and science to produce what we need, and free us for that part of life which lies above the material foundation, but which sinks when the material support gives way.

It is time we abandoned the spirit of cynicism, the feeling of defeatism and the sense of helplessness that weigh us down. It is time that we build—not a Utopia—but a practical, constructive plan for running this world of ours in such a way as to ensure the happiness and welfare of its people; before a “glowing spark” alights on the “rubbish heap” and razes its present distracted civilization to the ground.

In presenting this work we have no personal purpose to serve, save the hope that this exposition of Buddhism as a truly Social Religion would direct all men here to the need for creating a social

structure in harmony with the teachings of the Buddha, and thus assist in bringing about better conditions in the world, by wiping out the evils which afflict, and will continue to afflict, our civilization; and thus relieve our fellow men of the burdens that oppress them.

No new fundamental doctrine or revolutionary theory is promulgated in this work. We have simply gone to the Bo-tree for morality and come back two thousand five hundred years for the exposition of that morality. And in that exposition, no originality of expression is claimed, as the utilized material has been derived from the inspiration of those who have hitherto brought light to the world. As such we acknowledge our indebtedness to the great minds whose works have helped us in the composition of this treatise. A list of the authors whose works have been largely laid under contribution is given at the end of the book. To these we hereby make acknowledgement of grateful thanks. Though this volume is based on quotations and adaptations, originality is claimed for the method of treatment of the harvested material, the theories advanced, and the conclusions arrived at. That some of the views expressed will surprise, or perhaps even dismay, well-intentioned people with a traditional outlook is a regrettable necessity.

Though our procedure has been professedly critical, we do not think that the result is entirely negative. Anyone who so chooses could pick out of the foregoing pages considerable fragments of a constructive creed; whether he would then accept that creed is another matter. The demand, that if one criticises, one must construct, is a just demand to this extent only—that criticism, in order to be listened to, and to be intelligible, must proceed from a consistent standpoint; but they do not need to be made on the basis of a completed dogmatic system.

This is the time to be practical—to stop in our reckless and unmeaning pursuit of wealth, and to ask whither the quest is leading us. If we do not stop now, it will be too late afterwards. We are nearing the fork in the path. One prong leads to order, co-operation, peace and happiness. The other leads to conflict, violence, anarchy and ruin. This is not the time to raise the panic cry of “Red Vermin” or “Save Religion”. It is the time for calm, scientific inquiry, for constructive planning and organization, and then for action. That time is now, when civilization is nearing the fork.

Social reform is not to be secured by noise and shouting; by complaints and denunciation, or by the making of revolutions, but by the awakening of thought and the progress of ideas. Until there be Right Thought, there cannot be Right Action; and when there is Right Thought, Right Action *will* follow.

Power is always in the hands of the masses of men. But they are too depressed, too embruted with hard toil and the struggle for animal existence, to think for themselves. Therefore the obligation devolves, with all the more force, on those who can. If thinking men are few, they are for that reason all the more powerful. Let no one imagine that he has no influence. Whoever he may be, and wherever he may be placed, the man who thinks becomes a light and a power.

We have made, and still are making, enormous advances on material lines. It is necessary that we advance commensurately on moral lines. Civilization, as it progresses, requires a higher conscience, a keener sense of justice, a warmer feeling of brotherhood, a wider, loftier, truer public spirit. Failing these, civilization must crash to destruction. It cannot be maintained on the ethics of savagery. For civilization knits men more and more closely together, and constantly tends to subordinate the individual to the whole, and to make social conditions more and more vital.

The social and political problems that confront us are darker than they, who have not given thought to such matters, can realise; yet the solution is a mere matter of the proper adjustment of social forces. Man masters material nature by studying her laws; and in conditions and forces that seemed most forbidding, he has already found his richest storehouses and most powerful servants. Although we have but begun to systematize our knowledge of physical nature, it is evident she will refuse us no desire if we but seek its gratification in accordance with her laws.

And that faculty of adapting means to ends which has enabled man to convert the once impassable ocean into his highway, to transport himself with a speed which leaves the swallow behind, to annihilate space in the communication of his thoughts, to convert the rocks and water-falls into warmth and light and power and material for a thousand uses, to split the atom, to weigh the stars and analyse the sun, to make ice under the equator, and bid flowers bloom in northern winters, will also, if he will but use it, enable him to overcome social difficulties and avoid social dangers. The domain of law is not confined to physical nature. It embraces just as certainly the mental and moral universe, and social growth

and social life have their laws as dominant as those of matter and of motion. Would we make social life healthy and happy, we must discover those laws, and seek our ends in accordance with them.

Economic conditions today are not what they were fifty years ago. Political changes occur in the course of economic change, and of change in ways of thinking and living. If there is any fundamental unhappiness and unrest in the lives of men, one must look for a cause, therefore, not only in the innate character of men and women but also in the conditions of their environment—their physical, economic, political, social and psychological environment.

Men react to their environment and environment reacts on men. The world of human beings is not a beehive. Society is not the end of existence but the means of living together, a system. Community is not God; it is a group of individuals. That is why it is so futile to speak of society as the enemy of the individual; it would be more justifiable to regard the beehive as the enemy of the bee—the bee gets so little out of life. Man's inhibitions and repressions and complexes, his ignorance and prejudices, his fears and conflicts, his intolerance and superstitions, are his enemies: he has subdued physical nature far more effectively than he has learnt to subdue these.

And what more clear than that the theory of the persistence of force, which teaches us that every impulse continues to act and react, must apply as well to the universe of mind as to that of matter. Whoever becomes imbued with a noble idea kindles a flame from which other torches are lit, and influences those with whom he comes in contact, be they few or many. How far that influence, thus perpetuated, may extend, it is not given to him here to see.

The great work of the present generation for every man, and every organization of men who would improve social conditions, is the work of education—the propagation of ideas. It is only as it aids this purpose that anything else can avail. And in this work every one who can think may aid—first by forming clear ideas himself, and then by endeavouring to arouse the thought of those with whom he comes in contact. An old order does not disappear until a new order is ready to take its place.

We emphatically do not believe in the abolition of the existing order until we first have a workable plan for doing the country's needed service better. But, further, we do not believe that the existing order should be overthrown by "violence" or "brute force" or injustice of any kind. If we have spoken bitterly

of the acquisitive instinct, of the profit making motive, and of economic inequality, let it be remembered that we are bitter against the system and not against the individual.

Do not let us forget that social and political conditions cannot be kept for ever static, while economic change proceeds upon its way. Evolution must go on; the longer it is delayed the more explosive will be its action when suppression can no longer contain its great dynamic forces. We have witnessed already, in other countries, how violent are the struggles which accompany both the last efforts to retain the old and the first efforts to create the new.

We have seen great empires fall; we see universal upheaval, and nations disintegrating, and we hear rumblings of revolt in oppressed and alien-dominated countries. Even the apparent outward friendship of nations for each other at the moment is but the diplomatic politeness of the sheathed sword of competition, ready to be used to cut down and destroy when the time becomes ripe to do so. Is it not wise to think of these things before it becomes impossible for us to retrace our steps, and to take the other path ?

Is it not wise for both the Haves and Have-nots to meet in the Hall of Justice, and decide what is best to be done for the good of all ? Man is so constituted that it is utterly impossible for him to attain happiness save by seeking the happiness of others ; so does it seem to be in the nature of things that individuals and classes can only obtain their own just rights by struggling for the rights of others.

Hence it is, as Mazzini said, that it is around the standard of duty, rather than around the standards of self-interest, that men must rally to win the rights of man. And herein may we see the deep insight of Him who exhorted men to cultivate unhindered Love and Kindness toward the whole world.

In that spirit, and in no other, is contained the power to solve social problems and carry civilization onward. When the leaders of the world's thought, who mould the destinies of nations, realise that the old world with its old ways has perished, just as surely as though the heavens had been rolled up in a scroll, and the physical earth had been melted with fervent heat; and that all who live today are living in a new world with new thoughts, new impulses, and new ambitions—then assuredly will begin the true onward march of the children of men.

If Lanka takes the right Path, the rest of the world will follow.

*Lokaṃ dukkhadditaṃ disvā sukhaṃ santiṃ gavesayaṃ
Paṭipanno'smi taṃ maggaṃ sadā Buddhahi desitaṃ
Ten'eva añjasā tvampi ānīto āvuso mayā;
Paṭthemī tava kalyāṇaṃ sotthi te hotu sabbadā.*

*Porāṇānaṃ 'ayaṃ dīpo Sīhaḷānaṃ 'ayam mahī
Rajataṇṇava nikkhitta-maṇi laddhāsī'yaṃ dharā.
Ratanattayam 'āyattā Laṅkā 'yaṃ jagato sadā,
Saddhammassa have hotu dīpaṭṭhambho tamonudo.*

“*Dukkhaṃ lokassa nāsetuṃ sukhaṃ kātuṃ tathā mama
Samatthataṃ sadā hotu saṃsāre surato sato.*”*

“*Pañcavassasahassāni dīppatu jinasāsaṇaṃ
Pālayaṇ'u mahīpālā dhammena sakalaṃ paṇaṃ.*”†

I saw the suffering world, and sought the Path of Peace ;
I journeyed o'er the same Way the Buddhas ever teach ;
I have taken you, dear Comrade, along the self-same Path,
And, wishing for you Happiness, I bid you now farewell.

This land of an Ancient People, this Sinhalese Isle :
This Precious Stone set in the Silver Sea,
This blessed plot, this Lanka, this land of the Triple Gem :
Be it ever a Beacon-light of Dhamma to the world.

“To destroy the world's ills and to bestow Happiness on it,
May I always possess ability as long as I journey in Saṃsara.”

“May the message of the Buddha flourish for five thousand years,
May the world's rulers govern all peoples Righteously.”

HERE ENDS THE DHARMA-VIJAYA OR “THE REVOLT IN THE TEMPLE”

COMPOSED BY D. C. VIJAYAVARDHANA TO COMMEMORATE

2,500 YEARS OF BUDDHISM, OF CIVILIZATION IN

LANKA, AND OF THE SINHALESE NATION

THAT CAME INTO BEING WITH

THE BUDDHA'S BLESSING.

APPENDIX THREE

TOLSTOY'S PROPHETIC VISION

IN the year 1910 Tolstoy made a prophecy about the future of the world. While his time schedule was somewhat confused, the events he foresaw are a remarkable prevision of present conditions.

The great Russian novelist's prediction is quoted in the book, *Prophecies*, published by Faber and Faber, England, and runs as follows:

"This is a revelation of events of a universal character which must shortly come to pass. Their spiritual outlines are now before my eyes. I see floating upon the sea of human fate the huge silhouette of a nude woman. She is—with her beauty, her poise, her smile, her jewels—a super-Venus.

"Nations rush madly after her, each of them eager to attract her especially. But she, like an eternal courtesan, flirts with all. In her hair—an ornament of diamonds and rubies—is engraved her name: *Commercialism*.

"As alluring and bewitching as she seems, much destruction and agony follow in her wake.... And, behold, she has three gigantic arms with three torches of universal corruption in her hands.

"The first torch represents the *Flame of War*, that the beautiful courtesan carries from city to city and country to country.

"The second torch bears the flame of *Bigotry and Hypocrisy*.... it carries the seed of falsity and fanaticism. It kindles the minds that are still in their cradles and follows them to their graves.

"The third torch is that of *The Law*, that dangerous foundation of all unauthentic traditions which first does its fatal work in the family, then sweeps through the larger worlds of literature, art and statesmanship.

"The great conflagration will start about 1912, set by the torch of the first arm in the countries of south-eastern Europe. It will develop into a destructive calamity in 1913. In that year I see all Europe in flames and bleeding....

"But about the year 1915 a strange figure from the North—a new Napoleon—enters the stage of the bloody drama. He is a man of little militaristic training, a writer or journalist, but in his grasp most of Europe will remain until 1925.

"The end of the great calamity will mark a new political era for the Old World. There will be left *no countries, but empires or kingdoms*. The world will form a federation of the United States of Nations. There will remain only four great giants—the Anglo-Saxons, the Latins, the Slavs, and the Mongolians.

"I see a change in religious sentiments. The second torch of the courtesan has brought about the fall of the Church. The ethical idea has almost vanished. Humanity is without moral feeling.

"But then a great reformer arises....God, soul, spirit, and immortality will be molten in a new furnace, and I see the peaceful beginning of an ethical era. The man determined to this mission is a Mongolian Slav. He is already walking the earth—a man of active affairs. He himself does not now realize the mission assigned to him by a superior power.

"And behold the flame of the third torch, which has already begun to destroy our family relations, our standards of art and morals. The relationship between man and woman is accepted as a prosaic partnership of the sexes. Art has become realistic degeneracy. Political and religious disturbances have shaken the spiritual foundations of all nations. Only small spots here and there have remained untouched by these destructive flames.

"The anti-national wars in Europe, the class war in America and the race wars in Asia have strangled progress for half a century.

"But then, in the middle of this century, I see a hero of literature and art arising from the ranks of the Latins and purging the world of the tedious stuff of the obvious. It is the light of *Symbolism* that shall outshine the torch of *Commercialism*.

"In place of the polygamy and monogamy of to-day, there will come a *poetogamy*—a relation of the sexes based on poetic conceptions of life.

"And I see the nations growing wiser and realizing that the alluring woman of their destinies is, after all, nothing but an illusion.

"There will be a time when the world will have no use for armies, hypocritical religions, degenerate art and decadent political systems.

"Life is evolution, and evolution is development from the **simple** to the more complicated forms of the mind and body.

"I see the passing show of the world drama in its present form, **how** it fades like the glow of evening upon the mountains.... and a **new** history begins."

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GLOSSARY

Adigar. Originally Prime Minister of the Kandyan King. Now the highest of the honorary titles conferred on the Kandyan Sinhalese and Tamils of Ceylon.

Appu. Chief male domestic servant.

Arahat. (skt. *Arahant*). A Buddhist saint, or a perfected man ; a non-attached person; one whose self has been tamed or cast off.

Ayah. Children's nurse or lady's maid.

Bhikkhu. (skt. *Bhikshu*). Mendicant, religious devotee corresponding to the mediaeval Catholic Friar.

Boy. Vocative for male servant. A Westernised corruption of the Indian word "Bhai", meaning Brother.

Chēna. A patch of forest-land burnt down and cultivated by primitive methods.

Dēvālu. Temple of Hindu god worshipped by Sinhalese Buddhists.

Dēvas. Gods, celestial beings.

Devis. Goddesses.

Gāthā. A short verse with a religious meaning; A Pali stanza.

Gauva. Sinhalese measurement of distance, equivalent to about a third of a mile.

Goīya. A peasant or a cultivator.

Hidalgos. Spanish and Portuguese nobles.

Kandyans. Inhabitants of the hill country of Ceylon.

Kapuwa or *Kapurāla*. Officiating priest of a *Devāla*.

Kurakkan. Cereal food grown in the "dry-zone" of Ceylon.

Magul-bera. The drum used on occasions of ceremonial rejoicing.

Mammoty. Agricultural implement for digging.

Nirodha. Suppression, destruction; cessation of suffering.

Pāvada. White cloth or carpet laid on the ground against the arrival of a distinguished guest. Hence, sign of welcome.

Pitaka. "Basket." *Tri-Pitaka* or "Three Baskets" is the name used for the three divisions of the Buddhist Canon.

Pōya (day). Days for religious observance, especially the four phases of the moon.

Rājakāriya. Originally service (feudal) due to the Sinhalese king. Now "duty," especially "public duty."

Rājarata. "King's country", i.e. the ancient Kingdom of Anuradhapura.

Rāja Yōga. The science of conquering the inner nature.

Salākā. A ticket consisting of slips of wood used in voting.

Samsāra. The wheel of life. The endless round of birth and rebirth, the cessation of which for the Buddhist means salvation.

Samudaya. Rise, origin; cause of suffering.

Sanghika. Belonging to the religious community.

Sankhāra. A Pali word with many meanings. Literally denotes either (1) that which is put together, compounded, conditioned, produced by a combination of causes or (2) that which puts together or creates. In the passive sense, it means "phenomena, physical or material life, all conditioned things, which have been made up by pre-existing causes" (Pali Dict.). Also employed to denote the fourth of the five *Khandhas* and the second of the twelve *Nidanas* (Causes) in the formula of *Pativca Samuppada* (Dependent Origination). As a *Khandha* (Skt. *Skandha*) we translate it as "mental tendencies."

Stūpa. Sacred dome-shaped structure, enshrining a relic of the Buddha.

Swāmi. A title meaning "master" or "spiritual teacher".

Tathāgatha. The Enlightened One; the Perfect One. An epithet often used by the Buddha when He referred to Himself.

"Twice Born". A Brahmin was said to be born twice; first naturally, second when he was initiated into his religion and a sacred thread put on him.

Vedās. The Hindu Scriptures consisting of the *Rigveda*, the *Yajurveda*, the *Samaveda*, the *Arthavaveda*; also the *Brahmanas* and the *Upanishads*.

Verti. Soft white cloth worn round the lower limbs.

Vesak. The month corresponding to May in the Western Calendar. The full moon day of the month is celebrated by Buddhists as the day of the Buddha's birth, of His Enlightenment and of His death.

Vessantara. A character in the *Jātaka* or "Birth-stories" of the Buddha in which the *Bōdhisattva* gives away his worldly possessions, including his wife and children, in order to perfect the *Dāna Pāramita* or the virtue of generosity. Hence, means absolute selflessness.

Vihāra. Originally hermitage, abode of a Buddhist mendicant. Then monastery for bhikkhus. Now Buddhist place of worship in a general sense.

Vinaya. Rules regulating the monastic discipline of the Order of bhikkhus (Sangha).

Vishnu. The "Preserver" of the Hindu Trinity who takes care of the universe. The Patron Deity of Ceylon.

Walauiwa. Originally, residence of a Sinhalese nobleman or district ruler. Now, residence of the holder of an honorary rank or title, or of a landed proprietor.

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